



What is ACTS?

Historically, the church's ministry of making disciples and grounding them in the basic beliefs of the Christian faith has been known as *catechesis*. Anglicans see the Holy Scriptures as the source and foundation for testing all that is taught in the Church. Rooted in the Bible, a classical catechism has always been based on three building blocks of the faith: The Apostle's Creed, The Lord's Prayer, and The Ten Commandments. For two millennia, the core beliefs and practice of the Christian faith have been summarized in these foundational documents.

Catechesis plays a critical role in the ministry of the Church and is vital for the Church to fulfill Christ's mandate to make disciples. The task of reconciling the world to Christ is a call of the whole body of Christ, not just the ordained clergy. Partnering with ordained clergy, lay catechists serve as leaders and equippers in local congregations and throughout the Anglican Diocese of San Joaquin in preparing "God's people for works of service, so the body of Christ may be built up" and brought to maturity (Ephesians 4:12-16), resulting in fruitful ministry.

The primary ministry of a catechist is to teach the essentials of the faith, which are rooted in Scripture and expressed in the ACNA Catechism, *To Be A Christian*, which is comprised, as mentioned above, of the Apostles Creed, The Lord's Prayer, and The Ten Commandments. Not only are catechists expected to develop skills and effective teaching practices, but to be effective disciple-makers, they will need to be persons of prayer. It is only those who abide in God's presence who will be able to bear much fruit for the Kingdom. Since spiritual formation is essentially relational in nature, catechists need to be committed to growing spiritually and emotionally through prayer and mentoring.

The first year of ACTS consists of three modules, which prepares the student for licensing as a Catechist in the Anglican Diocese of San Joaquin. The three modules, or courses, are as follows:

Module 1: The Apostles' Creed (Offered in the fall for 12 sessions)

Module 2: The Lord's Prayer (Offered in winter for 6 sessions)

Module 3: The Ten Commandments (Offered in the spring for 6 sessions)

Each module incorporates three-dimensions:

1. Deepening of biblical and theological knowledge
2. Spiritual Formation
3. Ministry Practicum

Each dimension works with the others in forming and preparing the student for the ministry of a Catechist and lay leader. The course will consist of a combination of hands-on training and regular mentoring with one's clergy or other lay leader and independent study and class attendance. Each dimension is intended to develop four essential qualities that spiritual leaders need:

- 1) a deeper understanding of sound doctrine in the Christian faith (1 Tim. 4:16),
- 2) a spiritual formation that leads to maturity of the whole person (e.g., spiritual, emotional, character, etc.) (Eph. 4:11-15),
- 3) a growing lifestyle of abiding in Christ (John 15:5; 1 John 2:27),
- 4) and a growing faith, discernment and obedience to God's leading (Luke 17:5, 6; Rom. 1:5).

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