



## What is the Anglican Catechist Training School, or ACTS?

Primarily when we think of catechists, we think of people being called to a teaching ministry in the local congregation, which may include teaching youth and adult catechism classes, leading Alpha Groups, or Bible studies. This ministry is greatly lacking and much needed in God's church today. However, catechesis is far greater than just teaching doctrine. Catechesis involves the formation of the whole person into the image of Christ; therefore, license catechists may feel called to other ministries such as spiritual direction, intercession, pastoral counseling, inner-healing, or ministering to the poor or the infirmed. Some catechists may be called to evangelism and mission within or beyond their local context, which is what Anglicans call "catechesis from the front porch." All these callings are vital ministries in the church's call to fulfill the Great Commission to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything" Jesus commanded. Since these ministries can only bear fruit by the leading and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, students engage in spiritually formative practices throughout the year that enables them to hear God's voice and follow his leading.

ACTS is a year-long program consisting of three-dimensions: **deepening of biblical and theological knowledge, spiritual formation, and 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 that includes: assigned reading, online reflections and responses, monthly face-to-face meetings in person or via Zoom from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., and a retreat. At the end of the course, students are eligible for licensing as catechist by the diocese.

The cost of the year-long program is \$200, and partial scholarships are available for those for whom this cost is a challenge. **Applications are due July 30, 2021**, or July 16 for a discount. **The first class**, which is a short information meeting, meets **August 11 at 6:30 via Zoom.**

If you are interested in this course, first pray and ask the Holy Spirit to confirm your call to participate this year and then talk to your clergy for further discernment. You can obtain information and an application at <https://www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net/catechetical-resources.html>. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Beth Conkle at [eaconkle.acts@gmail.com](mailto:eaconkle.acts@gmail.com) or Fr. Anthony Velez at [aj68velez@gmail.com](mailto:aj68velez@gmail.com).