

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN REGION
CCBI COMMITTEE FOR CATECHETICS**
'Sarvodaya' - Centre for Capacity Building
St. Pius X College Complex, Virwani Industrial Estate Gate # 2
Aarey Road Goregaon (East) Mumbai 400 063
24th and 25th January, 2018

Main Theme: Adult Catechesis

AGENDA

FIRST DAY: 24th January, 2018, Wednesday

- 8.00 a.m.** : Breakfast
- 9.00 a.m.** : **Inaugural Session**
- Prayer Service - **Fr. Surjeet Tirkey**, Director of the Catechetical Centre, Diocese of Amravati
 - Welcome and Self-Introduction
 - Report of the Western Region Committee for Catechetics (January 2017)
 - Dynamics of the Meeting - **Fr. Romeu Godinho**, Secretary, WRCC
 - Key-Note Address – **'The Vision of Jesus: Inspiration for Catechists and Faith Formators'** -- **Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão**, Chairman of the WRCC
- 10.30 a.m.** : Tea Break
- 11.00 a.m.** : **Presentation 1: The What and the Why of Adult Catechesis**
-- **Fr. Aniceto Pereira**, Rector, St. Pius X College, Bombay
- 1.00 p.m.** : Lunch
- 2.30 p.m.** : **Presentation 2: The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults – The Original form of Adult Catechesis** - **Fr Vincent D'Cruz**, Director of the Catechetical Centre, Bombay
- 3.15 p.m.** : **Presentation 3: Numericals in the Bible and Liturgy** - **Fr. Prashant Saldanha**, Vasai.
- 4.00 p.m.** : Tea Break

- 4.30 p.m.** : **Brief Sharing by each Diocesan Director / Representative**
How do you conduct Adult Catechesis in your Diocese?
7 - 10 minutes per Diocese
- 6.00 p.m.** : Break
- 7.00 p.m.** : **Holy Eucharist** (Abp. Chairman Filipe Neri Ferrão)
- 8.00 p.m.** : Supper

SECOND DAY: 25th January, 2018, Thursday

- 7.00 a.m.** : **Holy Eucharist** (Abp. Filipe Neri Ferrão)
Shared Homily / Reflection
- 8.00 a.m.** : Breakfast
- 9.00 a.m.** : **Presentation 4: Venues and Occasions for Adult Catechesis**
-- **Fr. Briston Britto**, Director of the Catechetical Centre,
Poona
- 10.00 a.m.** : **Presentation 5: Adult Catechesis in the Christian**
Community – Some Principles and Guidelines -- **Fr. Duming**
Gonsalves, Executive Secretary, CCBI Commission for
Catechetics
- 11.00 a.m.** : Tea Break
- 11.30 a.m.** : **Implementation of the Action Plan of the CCBI in our**
Dioceses -- **Fr. Ashish Maske**, Director of the Catechetical
Centre, Aurangabad
- 12.15 a.m.** : **Future Plans/Initiatives in the Dioceses** (Open to all)
Other Matters
Next Meet: Date, Venue and Theme
Vote of Thanks -- **Fr. K. D Thomas**, Director of Catechetical
Centre, Nagpur
- 1.00 p.m.** : Lunch and Departure

Other responsibilities:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| To introduce Fr. Aniceto: | Fr Vincent D’Cruz |
| Vote of thanks to Fr. Aniceto: | Fr. Caesar Dabre |
| Vote of thanks to Fr. Duming: | Fr. Kiran Gohil |

REPORT OF THE MEETING

The meeting of the Western Region CCBI Committee for Catechetics began at 9.30 a.m. on 24th January, 2018. This was the sixth meeting with Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão as the Chairman of the W. R. Committee for Catechetics. Fr. Romeu Godinho, Secretary of the Committee, welcomed the members present and expressed his joy on seeing them. He also welcomed the Chairman and said that His Grace had been a guiding force for all these years and that he was extremely happy to have him in our midst. With immense joy Fr. Romeu welcomed and introduced Rev. Fr. Duming Gonsalves, the Executive Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Catechetics. He said that his presence at this Western Region meet signifies his love and concern towards the Region. He also welcomed and introduced Rev. Fr. Jervis D'Souza, the Deputy Secretary of the W. R. Bishops' Council, who resides at St. Pius X College, Bombay. Fr. Romeu then requested Fr. Surjit Tirkey, the Director of the Catechetical Centre, Diocese of Amravati, to lead the members in prayer. This was followed by the self-introduction of the members. A report of the W. R. Committee for Catechetics 2017 was then read, initially by Fr. Romeu Godinho, the Secretary, while other members took turns to read parts of the same.

The following members were present at the meeting:

1. Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão – Chairman, Western Region Committee for Catechetics.
2. Fr. Duming Gonsalves – Executive Secretary, CCBI Commission for Catechetics.
3. Fr. Romeu Godinho – Director, Archdiocese of Goa and Daman.
4. Fr. Briston Britto – Director, Diocese of Poona.
5. Fr. Vincent D'Cruz – Director, Archdiocese of Bombay.
6. Fr. Kiran Gohil – Director, Archdiocese of Gandhinagar.
7. Fr. K. D. Thomas – Director, Archdiocese of Nagpur.
8. Fr. Caesar Dabre - Director, Diocese of Vasai.
9. Fr. Prashant Saldanha – Assistant Director, Diocese of Vasai.
10. Fr. Surjeet Tirkey – Director, Diocese of Amravati.
11. Fr. Ashish Maske – Director, Diocese of Aurangabad.
12. Sr. Ramila Parmar – Directress, Diocese of Ahmedabad.
13. Fr. Alex Fernandes – Director, Diocese of Baroda.
14. Fr. Francis Fernandes – Director, Mission of Daman and Dadra Nagar Haveli.

Keynote Address

Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão drew the attention of the participants to *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 7, which states that Jesus is the greatest evangelizer, and then he introduced his topic, **“The Vision of Jesus: Inspiration for Catechists and Faith Formators.”**

While giving the keynote address, His Grace systematically classified the first twelve chapters of the Gospel of Matthew. He then introduced the Parable of the Sower (Matthew, Chapter 13) and said that “like Jesus, our work is to sow, and in order to catechize others, we must get out of ourselves and go to others.” He reminded the participants that our responsibility is to sow the seed of faith with good words and deeds, especially by our life-witness. There is no doubt that one day it will bear fruit; our task is not to wait for the fruit, but to continue sowing. The Archbishop enlightened and encouraged the participants to be bold and courageous in their catechetical ministry. He concluded by remarking that, whatever be the outcome of his work, the sower has to carry on sowing, like Jesus, with unconditional faith in the fecundity of the soil. The action of the sower (the Catechist) has to be gentle, animated by faith, hope and optimism (cf. 2 Cor 9: 6-15).

Presentation One: The What and the Why of Adult Catechesis

Fr. Aniceto Pereira, Rector of St. Pius X College, introduced his topic by referring to the various factors considered responsible for Adult Catechesis in the U.S. They are:

1. Events and insights that triggered doubts of faith.
2. Cultural secularization that led to consider religion as an option.
3. Disaffiliation from religion gave a sense of relief and freedom.
4. Religion was forced on them as children; they won't do the same to their own children.
5. Conviction that, for a good moral life, religion is not necessary.
6. The idea that reason and rationality are sufficient, that religious beliefs are not required.

Mentioning these factors, Fr. Aniceto introduced to the participants various ages/stages according to Erik Erikson -- from the Oral Sensory stage to the Maturity stage -- and the various tensions that characterize each of them, such as Intimacy v/s Isolation, Generativity v/s Stagnation, Ego Integrity v/s Despair, etc. He then spoke about Erikson's contemporary, Daniel Levinson and his “Eras.” He stressed the aspect of transitions in some of his “eras.” Carl Roger's perspective on adult development was also dealt with, especially in the context of one's relationship and character. He also referred to Paulo Freire's theories of learning among adults. He stressed on transactions, giving enough food for thought. Finally, he led the participants in a case study and its impact on adults.

He thus gave the participants the HOW of conducting catechesis, citing the examples of Fr. Elias Pereira and Archbishop Oscar Romero. He motivated the participants to conduct adult catechesis in their own context. It was indeed an enriching and participatory session.

Presentation Two: The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Fr. Vincent D’Cruz, Director of the Catechetical Centre, Bombay, spoke about the original form of Adult Catechesis. He clarified the terms in the documents like RCIA, rite, neophyte and catechumenate. He then shared with the participants the history of the Catechumenate programme. While explaining the structure of the RCIA proper, he also shared with the participants the drawbacks and lapses in conducting the RCIA in the Archdiocese of Bombay. He later displayed the various resources available for Adult Catechesis in Marathi, Hindi, Tamil and English.

Presentation Three: Numericals in the Bible and Liturgy

After an enlightening session on RCIA, Fr. Prashant Saldanha, the Assistant Director, Catechetical Centre of Vasai, kept the participants quite engaged with his number magic. His presentation on “Numericals in the Bible and Liturgy” was full of insights. He highlighted the numbers and their significance and how they can help in speaking about Liturgy and Bible. Beginning from God, who represents No. 1, he went on till No. 12. He also mentioned that they have introduced in their Diocese of Vasai a page for the children, featuring the numericals. The participants were delighted to have a new tool for their catechetical sessions.

Brief Sharing by each Director/Representative

In the evening, the participants shared about their activities in the field of Adult Catechesis.

- **Fr. Thomas K.D.** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Nagpur) shared how he has introduced Adult Catechesis for the Parents of the Sunday School children in his Archdiocese; he also referred to the seminars, retreats, marriage preparation courses, RCIA sessions and pilgrimages for the faithful being organized in view of promoting adult faith formation in the Archdiocese.
- **Fr. Briston Britto** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Poona) spoke about the highs and lows in the catechetical ministry carried out in the Diocese of Poona and how there is still a long way to go. He mentioned that they are also conducting formal catechesis for adults through recollections, training sessions as well as informal meetings with the parents.

- **Fr. Vincent D’Cruz** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Bombay) introduced his programme of Adult Catechesis first of all through publications like ‘Awakening Faith’ and RCIA. He also spoke about the formal adult catechesis imparted at the pre-baptism sessions, marriage preparation courses, etc. He referred to the three recollections for Catechists at the deanery level where the material is sent by the Centre. He mentioned few other activities like:
 - CTC (Catechists Teachers Course) Diploma – 10 months from June to March;
 - Seminary formation – Seminarians are given classes in Catechesis;
 - Spontaneous catechesis through Biblical Commission, Couples for Christ, Marriage Encounter and Small Christian Communities;
 - He also shared that the schools are often not serious enough about Religious Education and use the allotted hour as the ‘zero hour,’ planning the annual day, the notice board and the like.

- **Fr. Caesar Dabre and Prashant Saldanha** (Vasai Diocese) reported that they tried to follow the 7 parameters given in the GDC. RCIA is also taken care of by the *Shield of Faith*, a Charismatic group that follows the syllabus of the Archdiocese of Bombay. He referred to a few more activities like:
 - Theology Course for the Laity;
 - Formal Catechesis, i.e. 5 lectures, held by priests and three lectures by lay teachers;
 - Sessions for Altar Servers and small children as well as seminars for teachers;
 - Pre-Marriage Courses;
 - Regular visits to schools on the occasion of their annual day, parents’ day, etc.

- **Fr. Surjeet Tirkey** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Amravati) informed that they have duly appointed people for the work of Adult Catechesis. The students of the Minor Seminary are offered faith formation classes. He shared that faith formation sessions are given to spouses from the 1st year to the 15th year of their marriage.

- **Fr. Alex Fernandes, SDB** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Baroda) spoke of the Catechism Classes held in his Diocese from 5th to 12th Standard. The Altar Server’s Rally was an important moment in their journey of faith formation. He shared about the formative moments for his catechism teachers and Small Christian Communities throughout the year.

- **Fr. Ashish Maske** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Aurangabad) highlighted the following activities conducted by his Centre:

- Adult Catechesis using Biblical Parables;
 - Youth Fest, for which the youth of various deaneries are called;
 - Quiz competition for the Youth during Christmas time;
 - Faith Formation programme for Small Christian Communities;
 - Recollections for Catholic Teachers in schools.
- **Fr. Kiran Gohil** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Gandhinagar) mentioned a few activities organized in his Archdiocese:
- They have many Catholic boardings which organize students' reunions, during which they are given faith formation sessions;
 - The 'Krista Bhakta' concept of Varanasi Diocese has been introduced in the Archdiocese, whereby adults come to listen to the Word of God and receive religious instruction;
 - The 'Sacrament Day,' a day for the communitarian administration of the Sacraments, is celebrated with increasing enthusiasm throughout the Diocese, he reported.
- **Sr. Ramila Parmar** (Directress of the Catechetical Centre, Ahmedabad) spoke about the following activities held in her Diocese:
- Theology Course for Laity and Catechists;
 - Formation for the Small Christian Communities and Bible groups as well as for the members of the Legion of Mary;
 - First Friday Masses in Schools and Parishes;
 - Catechesis for the First Holy Communion and Confirmation candidates;
 - Altar Servers' Rally;
 - Retreats and Night Vigils.
- **Fr. Francis Fernandes, S.F.X.** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Dadra and Nagar Haveli) referred to a few activities that were conducted in the Mission of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, of the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman.
- He explained that the faith of the people of this Mission is rather young: it is just 75 years old and is slowly growing thanks to the various catechetical programmes and activities. Boardings and schools offer a suitable environment for faith formation events.
 - At the Easter Vigil Sacraments of Initiation are administered to a steadily increasing number of candidates, after systematic adult catechesis.
 - A team of priests goes around the parishes imparting catechesis and faith formation.
 - Faith formation programmes are also organized for the children and the youth.

- **Fr. Romeu Godinho** (Director of the Catechetical Centre, Goa) shared about some of the faith formation activities that are conducted in view of Adult Catechesis in his Archdiocese:
- Regular Formation Sessions were organized for Animators of catechetical activities in schools and parishes;
 - Various programmes were held for Teachers, such as seminars, recollections, and retreats;
 - Two catechetical courses, over nine weekends each, were held for the Catechists of the Archdiocese, at the end of which almost 200 hundred participants received their Diplomas;
 - Various training sessions, formation programmes and recollections were conducted for different groups of catechists, at deanery as well as parish levels.

DAY TWO: 25th January, 2018

The second day began with the Holy Eucharist presided by Abp. Filipe Neri, who shared a few meaningful insights, relevant for our catechetical ministry, based on the Readings of the day and drawing inspiration from the exemplary life of St. Francis de Sales, whose feast was being celebrated on that day. The other participants too contributed their reflections.

Presentation Four: Venues and Occasions for Adult Catechesis

The presenter, Fr. Briston Britto, spoke first about the Church and its various documents on Adult Catechesis. Basing himself on the document *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community*, Fr. Briston proposed various venues for catechesis. He mentioned certain venues for formal catechesis, like parish, family, SCC, lay associations, institutions. He also challenged the participants to think out of the box and elicited responses from them. Thus a lot of brain storming happened during this session as a new way of teaching catechesis was being dealt with.

Presentation Five: Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community

The Resource Person, Fr. Duming Gonsalves (Executive Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Catechetics), basing himself on the New Evangelization of John Paul II and how to carry it out, dwelt in depth on the document promulgated by the International Council for Catechesis. Through his insights and experience, he went beyond the documents and made the discussion more relevant.

Five Practical Proposals planned by each Diocese

Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão motivated all the participants to reflect upon and adopt five practical initiatives regarding Adult Catechesis which they would wish to implement in their respective dioceses and commit themselves to. The following were the areas chosen by the various Representatives.

Archdiocese of Nagpur: Fr. Thomas K. D.

1. Catechesis through Retreats for Adults;
2. Catechetical Seminar/s for Parish and School Teachers;
3. Catechesis to Parishioners during parish visits.
4. Catechesis during pilgrimages;
5. Biblical Catechesis through Bible Quiz/zes.

Mission of Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli: Fr. Francis Fernandes, SFX

1. Catechetical sessions for adults preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation;
2. Sessions for Parents and relatives of those receiving the Sacraments of Initiation;
3. Regular training sessions for Catechists;
4. Faith formation sessions for young spouses;
5. Family Catechesis in every parish.

Diocese of Vasai: Fr. Caesar Dabre

1. Quarterly formation sessions for neophytes;
2. Half-yearly meeting with the RCIA candidates;
3. Formation sessions for parents of 1st Communicants;
4. Systematic Pre-Baptismal Catechesis;
5. Formation sessions for Sodality (*Women*), Prayer Groups and Catechists.

Archdiocese of Goa and Daman: Fr. Romeu Godinho

1. Implementation of the RCIA in the Archdiocese;
2. Adult Catechesis for members of Parish Associations / Groups;
3. Adult Catechesis during occasions like feasts, marriages, celebration of Sacraments, family events;
4. Reaching out to the migrants and conducting faith formation programmes for them with the help of the Parish Catechists;
5. Having a page on Adult Catechesis in our diocesan Catechetical Magazine (*Rays*).

Diocese of Poona: Fr. Briston Britto

1. Catechesis for the parents of Sunday School children (*as they wait for their children*);
2. Talks for the parents – School – P.T.A., School days;
3. Sacramental Catechesis for Parents and Godparents;

4. Lay Associations: Talk by a Priest (*faith formation moment*);
5. Involvement in Marriage Preparation Course together with a Canon Lawyer and the Family Commission.

Archdiocese of Bombay: Fr. Vincent D’Cruz

1. Sustenance and On-going formation:
 - a. To continue formation programmes for Catechists. (*will include those of Sunday schools, Regular schools, R.C.I.A. and Pre-Baptism*).
2. New Ventures:
 - a. To form a team to plan, organize and execute adult catechesis activities.
 - b. To begin Adult Catechesis for School teachers, by visiting each school, deanerywise;
 - c. To try and collaborate with the office for the SCCs and formulate sessions that could be conducted at the SCC meetings;
 - d. To include a module on Adult Catechesis in the Catechists’ Training Course.

Diocese of Baroda: Fr. Alex Fernandes, SDB

1. One or two Seminars every year for the Sunday School Faith Educators;
2. Two sessions every year for Senior Citizens;
3. Half-day Recollection and Confessions for Parents of the First Holy Communicants;
4. A Seminar every year for the members of the Parish Pastoral Council;
5. Area-wise Recollections for the SCCs.

Diocese of Amravati: Fr. Surjeet Tirkey

1. Awareness Programmes for Adults/Youth;
2. Seminars for the Parents: BCC, Families at parish/diocesan level;
3. Faith formation sessions for the couples (*year wise*);
4. Some inputs for the Catholic teachers;
5. Pilgrimages, once in a year.

Diocese of Aurangabad: Fr. Ashish Maske

1. Awareness programmes on the significance of faith for the adults;
2. Regular pastoral visits to the families;
3. Adult Catechesis for the Charismatic Prayer Groups;
4. Adult Catechesis for the members of the SCCs and other Lay Associations;
5. Pilgrimages for the faith formation of the Adults.

Diocese of Ahmedabad: Sr. Ramila Parmar

1. Adult Catechesis in each Parish throughout the year on some important topics;
2. Family Visits with Prayer service;
3. Adult Catechesis in the SCCs;
4. Sessions for parents on important Papal documents;
5. Marriage preparation courses and on-going formation for married couples.

Diocese of Gandhinagar: Fr. Kiran Gohil

1. Adult Catechesis in the month of May;
2. Bible Study for all age groups;
3. Faith formation seminars for all age groups;
4. Promoting a Wall Paper by the children;
5. Family Pastoral Visits.

Evaluation of the Meeting

Some time was spent in evaluating the entire Meeting. The following points emerged:

- The printed folder and the overall meticulous planning of the meeting were generally appreciated;
- It was felt that if the topic of each speaker was known to the other speakers beforehand, repetition could be avoided;
- It was proposed that the topics should be given to the speakers, rather than leave the choice to them;
- Fr. Thomas suggested that the sharing which is done by the Directors should be focused on the general theme of the meeting and deal with the related catechetical ministry carried out at the level of their respective diocese rather than of one's individual parish;
- Fr. Francis remarked that there were many inputs and therefore no sufficient time for reflection. The Archbishop suggested that there could be three sessions per day;
- Fr. Caesar liked Fr. Aniceto's presentation: it was a good blend of theory and praxis. He felt that there could be some moments of sharing after each of the presentations;
- It was felt that the keynote address of the Archbishop was well structured, but had to be rushed through, due to the constraints of time during the inaugural session;
- Fr. Duming remarked that the programme was well organized, systematic and well participated. He said that attending the regional meeting gives him always a lot of joy.

While concluding the Evaluation, Abp. Filipe Neri reminded the Directors that the Regional, Zonal and Diocesan Teams must strive to be in contact with one another, both formally and informally. He remarked that most of the recommendations made in the last years had been implemented. He insisted nevertheless that the proposal to have full-time Catechetical Directors should be given greater importance in each diocese and put into practice accordingly.

Next Meeting

The venue and the date for the next year's meeting was finalized. It is to be held in Goa, from **21st January, 2019** (afternoon) to **23rd January, 2019** (with lunch).

There was a brainstorming to choose the theme of the meeting. The following suggestions came up:

- **Youth Catechesis**, keeping in mind the Synod on Youth to be held at Rome;
- **Catechesis and Youth Ministry**. In this connection, Fr. Duming informed that the theme for the next National Catechetical Seminar would be focusing on the Youth; he suggested, therefore, that we should avoid choosing the same theme;
- **Liturgical Catechesis**, in order to reflect on how we can promote faith formation through liturgy. This theme found general acceptance.

Responding to the above, the Archbishop reminded that we still have the time to reflect about this before we take the final call.

Conclusion

Fr. Romeu Godinho expressed his gratitude to all the members present and acknowledged the good work that is being done in our respective dioceses. He thanked all the resource persons for enriching the members through their presentations and by sharing their valuable ideas and insights. He thanked Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão, who always makes it a point to be with the Catechetical Directors and to take part in their annual meeting. He also conveyed his sentiments of gratitude to Rev. Fr. Duming Gonsalves, Executive Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Catechetics, not only for attending the meeting, but also for enlightening the members on the COINCAT's Document, *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community*. He acknowledged that his presence was a great support and motivation for all the participants. He had a word of appreciation to all the participants for their wholehearted collaboration, including in the fulfilment of various tasks during the meeting. On behalf of the participants, Fr. K. D. Thomas proposed the vote of thanks and acknowledged with gratitude the services of the Team at Sarvodaya and expressed gratitude to one and all for their combined effort to make the meeting truly fruitful.

Fr. Romeu Godinho
Secretary of the Western Region, CCBI Committee for Catechetics