

Model of catechesis of the Apostolic Movement

The catechesis model reported here is the one appeared in the Dossier of the National Catechistic Office (p. 23-26), in which relevance is given to some experiences of adult catechesis present in Italy (5 in all, one of them is the Apostolic Movement's), forwarded us with a special questionnaire in occasion of the Catechists' National Convention held in Rome from 20 to 22 November, 1992, on the theme "Witnesses of the Gospel in the city of men - Adults in the faith, witnesses of charity"

national

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office**

The Catechists' National Convention

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WITNESSES OF THE GOSPEL

IN THE CITY OF MEN

Adults in the faith, witnesses of charity

**CATECHESIS OF THE ADULTS
BETWEEN CHRONICLE AND HISTORY**

CATECHESIS OF THE "APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT"

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1. - "Catechesis model" or "type" of the adults that we have held

A. Catechesis model

The Apostolic Movement, just founded at Catanzaro in 1979, and by now spread in more parts of Italy, started living a catechesis model of its own which is together: biblical, theological, liturgical, ascetic, sacramental.

B. Characteristics

1) The continuity: it is a program that does not run down in time and space.

- It does not end with the catechesis itself (it continues in the houses and in the families, with the personal search).

- It does not end like a course. It is a constant and daily meditation of the Word, according to the faith of the Church.

- It is not limited to illumine the intelligence.

2) It is directed to the heart and therefore to the conversion, to the sanctification.

- For this reason it is combined with the prayer and the sacraments, along with the spiritual direction.

3) All the laypersons are involved through the same method used.

- Short explanation and introduction of the theme.

- Much time offered to questions and particular exigencies.

- Everybody can take part to ask for explanations.

4) The catechesis is dialogical in the questions, but not in the answers, since they are always given by he who holds the catechesis. While the question manifests the doubt, or the uncertainty of he who asks it, the answer reveals and always expresses the faith of the Church. The certainty of the revealed truth feeds the soul and warms up the heart to the faith, to charity and to hope.

5) The catechesis becomes a form of life, a style of existence, a condition of the person for his right behaviour.

6) It also becomes a training to live the self mission and answer to God who calls (in such a sense it also favours the different vocations within the Christian people).

7) It is held by a theologian, with continuity, assiduousness, regularity. Suffice is to think that in 14 years of work it was never suspended in a single week; and till last year it was also held during the Summer. Now, in the Summer, we only celebrate the liturgy and the souls are guided with the spiritual direction. The space for the catechesis is dedicated to the reciprocal knowledge and to the fraternal dialogue, in order to grow in love and in charity.

C. Reasons why this "model" was chosen

1) It was necessary to found the faith in the heart of the believers again.

2) It was urgent to unite Word and faith, catechesis and life, catechesis and sacraments, sanctification and transformation of the world.

3) A model of global education to Christian life inside and outside of the Church was needed, before and after the celebration of the sacraments.

4) It was necessary to "invent" something that constantly accompanied the believer in the journey of his spiritual growth. A catechesis which were together education to the faith, liturgy, life, holiness, in a moment of communion with the other brothers, with the family itself and also on one's own; was and remains for us the only way to go along if we want fruits of holiness.

5) This model was chosen, also because we noticed somewhere else the crushing down of the truth and its elevated "personalisation". Many times the catechesis was a vain discussion and a following up of uncertainties and doubts. A hollow dialogue of uncertainties, hypotheses, suppositions. The few truths said were absorbed by the many non truths asserted, pronounced, left to be understood, intentionally scattered like stumbling stones on the weak and on the dubious.

2. Socio-cultural and religious environment in which the experience of the adults' catechesis took place

The environment is of a universal type: child, adult, learned person, ignorant, graduated, with a secondary high school diploma, licentiates; city and country environment, town and village: everybody in the catechesis must find the aliment of his own faith and the stimulus for his own sanctification. As a fact about three hundred persons coming from various parishes and social and cultural realities participate to the catechesis.

3. Educational needs presented by adults that participated or participate to this "model" of catechesis.

A fundamental need is: the refoundation of the life of faith, hope and charity. Another need is the doctrinal help and therefore the knowledge to operate well in the ecclesial life; that is rendering everybody able to take charge of a ministerial task and bring it to fulfilment with responsibility in the Church, with a rightful conscience, according to the faith, together with the rule of charity and to the norm of hope.

Another need, not least in importance: it wants everybody to be able to speak his own faith and announce it in every area and circumstance of life. The witness of charity, the example of holiness, must be entirely united with the "profession" of the own faith with clearness of content, with appropriate methodologies, with a sure language, with the witness of the Scripture, the history of the faith and the theology, with the actuality of the teachings of the universal and particular Church.

4. Educational objectives we set out to reach with this model of catechesis of the adults

The beginning of the self sanctification, and of the world sanctification, through the witness of charity and the announcement of the word. It is the same method of the rising Church: from the conversion to the sanctification, from the birth of the faith to the announcement of the faith with the witness of life. Holy Christians in order to sanctify the brothers.

5. "Important nuclei" of the Christian message ("contents"), which were deepened and dimensions of the catechesis which were privileged (biblical, doctrinal, liturgical, experiential catechesis, etc.)

The faith in its totality of Revealed truth, Tradition, Teaching, starting from the Scripture text, read with the faith of the Church, of yesterday and today.

6. Method adopted in this experience of catechesis of the adults (expositive, didactical, dialogical, of the research, celebrative, etc.). What role did the adults have? What role did the animator (or the animators) have?

The method adopted was expositive, didactic in the first part; dialogical in the second part (every participant can ask and have explanation on any point of the faith and theology; the answer is entrusted to the theologian.

The adults have the role of listening to their own and of intervening at every moment, in the search of the growth and maturation of their own faith.

7. Positive aspects and first fruits of this experience of catechesis of the adults

Little by little believing and faithful people are forming, actively and responsibly integrated in the Church mission and in the world, always in collaboration and obedience of faith to the shepherds. In the area of the Movement and of the catechesis were born 15 priestly vocations.

8. Difficulties encountered in the socio-cultural and ecclesial realities, in the participating adults, in the presentation of the Christian message, in the adopted method.

The fundamental difficulty is the big ignorance of the faith, for which we must often intervene on the arguments so that they may be fixed and stabilized in the mind and in the heart.

9. Pastoral and methodological choices in order to meliorate and make more efficacious this “model” of catechesis of the adults.

The only pastoral choice for us is that of wanting and being able to persevere.

10. Concrete help expected by the pastoral catechesis Centre or by other diocesan institutions, for the improvement and ulterior development of the catechesis of adults in general and of this “model” in particular.

Let the pastoral Centre remind everybody that there are “objective truths of the faith”, which when altered all the faith collapses, becomes vain. The faith is founded on the truth of God, of Christ and of man. Without this foundation of truth the faith becomes an idea, fideism, free thought. It is urgent and necessary for everybody to find the unity of the faith on the foundation of the Revealed truth, of the Tradition and of the Church Teachings.