

The State of Catechesis in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa: Towards a Unified Catechetical Program

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Abstract - *The study was conducted to know the state of catechesis in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa and proposed a unified catechetical program for basic education public schools under the vicariate. To achieve this purpose, this researcher assessed the students' extent of catechetical knowledge on Catholic doctrine, and it inquired about the effectiveness of catechetical methodology employed by the catechists of the vicariate. The respondents included 396 students from 16 secondary public national high schools. To gather the necessary data, this researcher employed quantitative and qualitative methods.*

Generally, the results revealed that students have significant, above-average scores in terms of Catholic Doctrines. However, upon further validations through focus group discussions, some discrepancies within the results were observed. There are several topics in the Catholic Doctrine that students still need to know, clarify, and understand better. On the other hand, the students assessed the effectiveness of Catechetical Methodology to be moderately effective. However, students' opinions revealed that some of the enumerated methodologies were not practiced nor applied in their class by the catechists. Moreover, the results of the study also showed that the students lack spiritual activities for their spiritual formation.

Keywords: *catechesis, catechetical methodology, catechetical program, Catholic Doctrine, spiritual formation*

INTRODUCTION

Catechesis is vital in the formation of faith of an individual. However, conducting catechesis has been facing various challenges both in the public and private sectors. Moran [1] reiterated such challenges and since catechesis is an optional, various problems emerge in different schools, especially in public academic institutions. In a public school setting, great difficulties are experienced, usually in terms of limited catechetical instruction, insufficient allotted time in catechesis, and lack of conducive environments for religious instruction [2].

According to Roche [3], there is a growing number of Catholic Filipino youths and children in public schools who need instruction on basic catechesis or religious education. Likewise, he noted that students and pupils must be given adequate catechetical formation because the attitudes, values, morality, and faith of young adolescents are slowly being eroded or contrasted with the Christian ideals.

Baring [4] showed the current state of catechesis in the Philippines, which is characterized by a continuously increasing population of students in need of catechesis,

the need for more volunteer catechists, and the lack of support program for the catechists.

In light of all these, it is imperative that the rising problems in catechesis and religious education be given enough attention and appropriate actions, to inculcate proper values to the young and the adults, to lead them towards maturity of faith, and to prepare them to have a personal relationship and commitment with Jesus Christ [2].

Since catechesis has different forms and various aspects to consider, the present study focused on the public school setting. It was noted by the NCDP [2] that the catechesis in the Philippines envisions closing the gap between the faith and the way of life of many Filipinos towards a genuine Christian life.

With the present observable problems in catechesis in the country, the Archdiocese of Lipa shares the same lamentations because aside from the lack of catechists in the secondary level, there is no existing standard catechetical program yet. Because of this reality, the researcher was motivated to know the state of catechesis in secondary public schools under Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa and to analyze its condition. The

result of the study would be the basis for creating a Unified Catechetical Program.

Catechesis

In the Philippines, catechesis has been a vital and timely concern by the local churches. The Catholic Bishops Conferences in the Philippines' (CBCP) position paper on the Synod Theme "Catechetics in Our Time" expressed general observations in the Philippines where catechesis must play an important role in forming the attitudes and values, not only of the students in schools but also of the adults and out-of-school youth. [5]. Catechesis, specifically in a school, is one of the means of evangelization. Through a systematic catechetical instruction, the catechists must instruct the students about the "fundamental teachings of the Church, the living content of the truth which God has wished to convey to us" [6]. Phan [7] recognized catechesis as an essential component of the church's evangelizing mission. It must be understood and carried out within that perspective, not in opposition or separation from evangelization.

Cardinal Vidal [8] reminded people, through his pastoral letter, of the mandate of the Philippine Constitution regarding religious instruction in public schools in both elementary and secondary levels, which should be taught in not more than 90 minutes within class hours. He appealed for more volunteer catechists because the ratio between the number of students in public schools and the number of catechists is not proportionate. Moreover, he also emphasized the need for the catechetical fund and the support from the government authorities and parents to facilitate the implementation of this catechetical work. Cardinal Vidal also added that: "This mission, given to us by God, begins at home, with our children. Parents are the first catechists" [8].

The Catechism of the Catholic Church [9] pointed out that parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. Parents are expected to be the first molders of values, attitudes, virtues, and the faith of their children. Education in faith must begin at the child's early years. Parents should be good models to their children in manifesting a truly Christian way of life and the

Catechetical Content

The main content of catechesis that must be transmitted and be accepted by heart is the Good News of Salvation [10] and the mystery of God's saving truth through Jesus Christ is the center topic [9]. Through catechesis, this one message must be reflected upon and

be studied in a systematic way towards a greater commitment to living a truly Christian life in society and the world [10].

According to the General Catechetical Directory, the starting point of catechesis must be the act of God's love in revealing Himself to people. This manifestation will help people to know God deeply and to have faith in Him. "Because faith has to be considered as a gift, it has a deep bearing on the whole subject-matter of the ministry of the word" [11].

The person and mission of Jesus are the heart and center of catechesis to deepen the faith of the Christians. Therefore, catechists, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, must speak with the truth about Jesus to put students "not only in touch but also in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ". Jesus' life teaches people how to live a Christian life. Likewise, Jesus teaches believers to follow Him and to be His disciples [12].

"Following Christ is not easy" but as a Christian, one must not only believe in doctrine but has to follow Jesus in action through "authentic discipleship" [12] because only by faith and doing acts of goodness or charity would be God's basis of judgment to people [13].

Deciding to follow Christ or doing discipleship could strengthen one's faith. Through this positive response, "Christian Faith radically influences the moral life of the Filipinos" [12] because only by faith could a person better understand what he/she seeks in God [14]. Moreover, such a decision to follow Christ and be one of His disciples in words and deeds could only be accomplished in communion, particularly with the Church [12].

In the Church, the sacraments are the center of Catholic life [15]. Sacraments are defined in many ways, but in any kind of celebration, these give Christians opportunities to have an encounter with God [12]. A sacrament is an external or sensible sign, instituted by Christ, which causes the grace it signifies [9].

To teach the catechetical content, many catechisms could be used in catechizing, but there is an inculturated catechism intended for the Philippine context that meets the needs in catechesis. "The call for a renewed integral catechesis has intensified the widely-felt need for a new, up-to-date, and officially approved exposition of the Catholic Faith" [15], and this urgent demand was answered by the Catechism for Filipino Catholics [12] which was used by the researcher and became the basis of this research.

Catechetical Methodology

In a classroom setting, catechists and religious educators use various catechetical methodologies to achieve the objectives concerning doctrine, morals, and worship. They choose from a variety of techniques on how to communicate the Word of God in a concrete situation and on the level of students' understanding. However, it was noted by the National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines that the effectiveness of any catechetical methodology is partly dependent on the competency of the catechists and religious educators. They must be careful in achieving the proper balance between the "God-inspired content (Revelation) and the chosen method for the proclamation in the specific context of the catechesis" [2]. The methodology is one of the important components in creating a catechetical program. Same with the content, the methodology needs an equal emphasis.

Different methods in catechesis have been continuously emerging. To assess the effectiveness of any catechetical methodology, the NCDP provided three basic criteria or catechetical principles, also known as the Pedagogy of Faith, which became the basis of the researcher in this study. The first principle, which is the integrated catechesis, "refers to the holistic, unified character of all authentic catechesis" [2]. Catechesis must be transmitted not only to be remembered but to put the Good News in heart and be lived out every day. Therefore, any form of integration aims at closing the gap between what is taught and what is lived in the students' daily lives. The basic goal of any form of integration is "to bring effectively the total inspiring message of Christ into the minds, wills, and hearts of today's Filipino" [2].

The second catechetical principle is an inculturated catechesis. Inculturation takes place in different ways and means in catechizing. This principle takes into consideration the persons being catechized. The catechist must be aware of the students' personal, social, economic, political, and spiritual backgrounds. Likewise, their family and community backgrounds will also be checked, along with their value system, cultures, and traditions. Moreover, this principle allows the catechists to express the Christian message through "images, symbols, and rites that are indigenous to Philippine culture" [2] like liturgy, para-liturgy, family celebrations, feasts, and sacramental practices. This principle aims to help the Filipinos better understand and perceive the "Good News" where they could easily relate and respond to in a uniquely Filipino manner.

The third and last principle is community-forming. The growth of the believers' faith must be built in forming a relationship with Christ and with the community. As members of the Church, they may be different from one another but they share in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Church's catechetical work [2].

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper focused on assessing the student's knowledge of Catholic Doctrines and their perceived effectiveness of Catechetical Methodology. The paper also sought to know the difference in the respondents' responses in terms of their profile variables. Likewise, it identified if there is a significant relationship between the students' knowledge of catechetical doctrine and the effectiveness of the catechetical methodology. The results of the study were used as the basis for proposing a unified catechetical program written in Filipino for Vicariate 7 secondary public schools.

METHODS

Research Design

The quantitative method using a questionnaire was applied to assess the knowledge of the students on catechesis and the effectiveness of methodology employed by the catechists. On the other hand, the qualitative method was also used to counter-validate and strengthen the students' responses to the questionnaire.

Respondents

The study involved 396 high school students from 16 public schools for the academic year 2017-2018 in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa, Batangas.

Considering the large population (12,468 students) of sixteen (16) secondary public schools in four Districts, proportionate random sampling was employed following the configuration of the districts within Vicariate 7.

For the sampling design, the total population of students in each district was gathered and the proportion of samples was computed using Slovin's formula following the population sizes of each district.

Instrument

The main instrument used in data gathering was a survey questionnaire, which was designed by the researcher. Only one set of the survey questionnaire was used in the study. It was designed to know the state of catechesis in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa. In doing this, the study was limited to assessing the respondents' knowledge of catechetical contents and

their perception of the level of effectiveness of the catechists' catechetical methodology employed in teaching. The questionnaire was validated by four subject matter experts and a measurement expert. Moreover, the questionnaire was written in Filipino because the target respondents came from public secondary schools and the medium of instruction in teaching Religion subject is Filipino. The said instrument was counterchecked by the Filipino Instructor for the accuracy of the items translated in Filipino.

The questionnaire for the students is composed of three parts: The first part of the questionnaire deals with the respondents' profile, which provided information in terms of gender, parental status, with or without catechesis, school, and year level.

The second part deals with the items on the Catechetical Contents, particularly on Revelation and Faith, Jesus and Discipleship, Morality/Moral Life, Church and Sacraments, and Mary, Mother of Jesus. Such items were based on the Catechism for Filipino Catholics.

The last part pertains to the items on Catechetical Methodology, which centered on the different types of methods and strategies employed by the catechists in teaching. The three principles (integrated, inculturated, and community-forming) on assessing the effectiveness of certain methodologies were derived from the National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines.

Procedure

Initially, the researcher submitted a letter to the following: the Archbishop of Lipa, Department of Education (DepEd) Region IV-A Superintendent, and sixteen school principals, to ask for permission to conduct the instrument to the students regardless of whether they receive catechesis or not. She then distributed the instruments. After retrieval, the researcher tallied and tabulated the data. The results were subjected to statistical treatment, interpretation, and analysis.

To further validate the results of the survey, the researcher interviewed to 16 students who represented all grade levels. The researcher went to four schools, two schools with formal religious education, and another two schools without formal religious education. [add]

The data were statistically treated using the following tools:

Frequency. It is used to determine the number of times which a particular data occurred (Panopio, 2004). For the present study, it was used to determine the number of times which the data occurred in the profile of all the respondents included in the study.

Percentage. It is used as one of the statistical tools expressing proportion (Panopio, 2004). In the present study, it was used to determine the portion of the respondents in terms of the profile variables.

Mean. It is an arithmetic average of a range of values or quantities to measure the mid-point of a set of values (Panopio, 2004). In the present study, it was utilized to compare the average mean scores of the student-respondents with regard to their gender, year level, school, with or without catechesis, and parental status in terms of content and methodology.

T-test. It is used to look at the differences in the responses between two groups on some variable of interest (Panopio, 2004). In this study, it was employed to know if there was a significant difference in the responses in terms of gender, family status, and with or without catechesis.

Chi-Square. This tool is applied when there are two categorical variables from a single population. It is used to determine if there is a significant association between the two variables (Punzalan and Uriarte, 2010). In the present study, it was used to know if there were significant relationships between the students' knowledge of catechetical content and the effectiveness of catechetical methodology employed by the catechists.

One-Way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). It is used to determine whether there are significant differences between the means of three or more independent unrelated groups (Punzalan and Uriarte, 2010). In this study, it was utilized to determine the significant differences in the responses of the student-respondents in terms of school and year level.

The following scales were used by the researcher in the study.

A. Catechetical Content

Score Range	Options	Verbal Interpretation
4.50-5.00	5	To a very great extent
3.50-4.49	4	To a great extent
2.50-3.49	3	To a moderate extent
1.50-2.49	2	To some extent
1.00-1.49	1	To least extent

B. Catechetical Methodology

Score Range	Options	Verbal Interpretation
4.50-5.00	5	Highly effective
3.50-4.49	4	Moderately effective
2.50-3.49	3	Least effective
1.50-2.49	2	Needs improvement
1.00-1.49	1	Not applicable

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following tables show the results derived from

the questionnaire administered in 16 secondary public schools within Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa. Table 1. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Revelation

Items	WM	VI
1. I know that God revealed Himself in the creation story.	4.28	GE
2. I know that God revealed Himself in different times and ways.	4.39	GE
3. I know that God revealed Himself to let people know His plan of salvation.	4.37	GE
4. I know that Jesus Christ is the fullness of God's self-disclosure.	4.36	GE
5. I know that God revealed Himself through the Scriptures.	4.49	GE
Composite Mean:	4.38	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

Table 1 displays that students have a great extent of knowledge on Revelation with the composite mean of 4.38. It implies that students have good knowledge of God's divine revelation. They have basic knowledge about God and the mystery of the saving plan for people. The results have similarities with the findings of Torres [16], which showed that the student-respondents have sufficient knowledge about God and the Sacred Scriptures. However, the interview resulted that they still lack knowledge about it. Thus, the researcher included in the program the necessary topics which students must know and understand about God and Sacred Scriptures.

Table 2. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Faith

Items	WM	VI
6. I know that faith is believing in God through Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit.	4.49	GE
7. I accept Jesus as my Savior because of my faith.	4.66	GE
8. I have a connection with God through my faith.	4.41	GE
9. I know that faith is one of the keys to attaining salvation.	4.59	GE
10. I know that faith is given by God.	4.39	GE
Composite Mean:	4.51	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

Table 2 shows the students' responses got the composite mean of 4.51, which affirms that they have a very great extent knowledge of Faith. They know well what faith is and it implies that students' have strong faith in God. Filipino youth are religious based on the

recent studies on the centrality of religiosity [17]. However, this contradicts the findings of Cornelio [18] with the declining faith of young Filipinos. This was also the concern of Moran [1] because many Christians, especially the youth, are now in a period of great crises concerning Christian faith. The NCDP [2] also has this notion that there is a gap between the claimed Christian Faith and the Christians' way of life nowadays. That is why Fr. Roche [19] challenged the catechists to close such a gap by integrating the basic dimensions of faith with the practical ways of the Christian life. In this regard, the PCP II [15] made catechesis as one of the instruments in molding one's faith, to be the priority of renewal.

Table 3. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Jesus

Items	WM	VI
11. I know that Jesus is the Son of God who saved us from our sinfulness.	4.60	GE
12. I know that Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead.	4.26	GE
13 I know that Jesus is the second person of the Holy Trinity.	3.95	GE
14. I have a personal relationship with Jesus.	4.18	GE
15. I know that Jesus Christ is both God and man.	4.20	GE
Composite Mean:	4.24	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

The students' response got a composite mean of 4.24, which affirms that they know concepts on Jesus to a great extent. The overall picture of the students' assessment of their knowledge and relationship with Jesus is relatively good. The data somehow revealed that students have little knowledge of the Holy Trinity and Jesus' dual nature as human and divine. It seems that students are not fully aware of the mystery of God with three divine persons and their functions as the Creator (Father), the Savior (Son), and the Sanctifier (Holy Spirit).

The result has similarities with what is happening in the society, which was noted by the CFC [12]. According to CFC [12], some of the Filipino Catholics find ways to be closer to Jesus and have the yearning for spiritual intimacy with Jesus but often, they could hardly live by Jesus' teachings in their daily words and actions. This statement was also agreed upon by some of the students during the interview. They shared that they find it hard to follow the teachings of Jesus and to do good every day.

As stated in Table 4, the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.27 which affirms that they know concepts on Discipleship to a great extent.

Table 4. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Discipleship

Items	WM	VI
16. I know that discipleship is a decision to live out the Christian Faith.	4.35	GE
17 I know that I have to live the Christian way of life.	4.41	GE
18 I responded to the call of Christ on following Him.	4.32	GE
19. I committed myself to follow Christ.	4.30	GE
20. I know that Discipleship is living a life like Christ.	3.94	GE
Composite Mean:	4.24	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

As stated in Table 4, the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.27 which affirms that they know concepts on Discipleship to a great extent. The students know that discipleship is not just having a relationship with Jesus but a matter of responding and committing oneself to follow Jesus towards moral life [12]. However, CFC [12] asserted that there seemed to have a serious gap between the external expression of Christian faith and authentic discipleship. At present, the same error is the split between the professed faith of many Catholics and the practice of their daily lives. This statement still holds to the present study, which was reflected in the information gathered during the interview.

Table 5. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Morality/Moral Life

Items	WM	VI
21. I know that God's commandments are the guide of every Christian to live a moral life.	4.17	GE
22. I know that God's commandments are the guide of every Christian to live a moral life.	4.31	GE
23 I live morally by respecting my dignity and other's dignity.	4.37	GE
24 I live morally by following my conscience.	4.22	GE
25. I respect my whole being and others as well because we are the temple of the Holy Spirit.	4.33	GE
Composite Mean:	4.28	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

As stated in Table 5, the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.28, which affirms that they know concepts on Morality/ Moral Life to a great extent. They have enough knowledge on how to live a moral life and how their conscience works. However, the interview revealed that there was a discrepancy between what they know and how they practice it. It is still one of the problems in the Philippines in terms of Catholic Morality. NCDP [2] revealed that many Filipinos profess their faith but at times they refuse to do what is good and proper in various situations according to the teachings of the Church.

As shown in Table 6, the students' response got a composite mean of 4.40 which affirms that they know concepts on Church to a great extent. The students manifest good knowledge of the sacredness of the Church as God's dwelling place. The student-respondents who are the youth of today must not only have good knowledge about the Church, but their active participation is expected as well. The students have the knowledge of how the Church can help their faith grow, but many of them are not that active in joining different religious activities and are unfaithful to observe Sunday Mass.

Table 6. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Church

Items	WM	VI
26. I know that the Church is composed of us, people of God.	4.44	GE
27. I know that the Church is the communion of people with God and with one another.	4.46	GE
28 I know that the church is a sacred place we pray and worship God.	4.43	GE
29 I know that the Church is the visible sign of God's spiritual grace.	4.32	GE
30. I know that the Church is where my faith grows.	4.34	GE
Composite Mean:	4.40	GE

Note: *GE – To a Great Extent*

The conducted survey research in the Philippines confirmed the result of the present study. According to the National Filipino Catholic Youth Survey [20] conducted by the Episcopal Commission on Youth (ECY), much Filipino youths prefer to pray individually but seldom or never participate in Church activities. The Youth Survey [19] reported that the attitude of the youth toward the Church has a very limited understanding of faith and only 18 percent of Filipino youth are involved in Church activities. In the findings of Torres [16], she

found out that the instruction on the Church seemed not given much emphasis. Thus, the schools' Religion Program must be improved and modified.

Table 7 depicts the students' response with a composite mean of 4.05 which affirms that they know concepts on Sacraments to a great extent. The data shows that the students' knowledge of sacraments is not only limited to the seven ritual celebrations in the Church but extends to a deeper meaning of sacraments as the visible sign of God's presence on earth. However, data on the survey conducted by the Episcopal Commission on Youth (ECY) in 2002 was quite contradicting to the present study. The survey showed that much Catholic youth's receptions on sacraments ranked second to the last among the things they do to express their faith. The said survey concluded that the youth's appreciation of the importance of sacraments is low [20].

Table 7. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Sacraments

Items	WM	VI
31. I know that the sacraments are the seven ritual-celebrations in the Church.	4.04	GE
32. I know that the sacraments are the visible signs and symbols of God's presence in our time.	4.05	GE
33. I know that the sacraments help us to nourish our Catholic Faith.	4.08	GE
34. I am aware that God's sacraments are closer to our everyday life.	3.97	GE
35. I know that Jesus is the sacrament of God on earth.	4.12	GE
Composite Mean:	4.05	GE

Table 8. The Students' Catechetical Knowledge on Mary, Mother of Jesus

Items	WM	VI
36. I know that Mary is the Mother of Jesus and our mother too.	4.31	GE
37. I know that Mary was conceived without original sin.	4.24	GE
38. I have a personal relationship with Mary.	3.91	GE
39. I know that Mary was assumed unto heaven both body and soul.	4.01	GE
40. I am aware that the two of the Holy Days of Obligation are in honor of Mary.	3.81	GE
Composite Mean:	4.06	GE

As can be gleaned from Table 8, the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.06, which affirms that they have concepts on Mary, Mother of Jesus to a

great extent. The students' knowledge about Mary as the mother of Jesus is relatively good. The present result of the study is congruent with the data of Sarmiento, which revealed that his participants are spiritually conscious about Mary in terms of their attitudes and practices. The present data also shows that students have a relationship with Mary although it is not that very deep. Likewise, the data shows that students seemed not fully aware that two of the Holy Days of Obligation that the Filipinos celebrate yearly are about Mary, as well as the rich meaning of the Marian Dogmas.

To sum up, students from sixteen schools know the Catholic Doctrines of the Church. Whether they have a Religion subject or not, the students know to a great extent the concepts on Revelation, Faith, Jesus, Discipleship, Morality/Moral Life, Church, Sacraments, and Mary, mother of Jesus. However, there was some discrepancy in the results between the interview and the survey questionnaire.

Table 9. Effectiveness of the catechists' methodology relative to Integration

Items	WM	VI
1. The catechist uses biblical narratives, liturgical acts, lives of saints, events in the Church and relate it with the lesson.	4.34	ME
2. The catechist proclaims the Gospel message and challenges us to apply it to a daily life event.	4.37	ME
3. The catechist requires us to memorize the basic prayers and to practice it in our daily life.	4.40	ME
4. The catechist integrates every lesson with the current social issues in the country.	3.83	ME
5. The catechist creatively uses the primary sources in teaching like the Bible, Church Documents, CFC, NCDP, and the like.	4.37	ME
Composite Mean:	4.26	ME

Note: *Moderately Effectively (ME)*

Table 9 shows that the students' response got the composite mean of 4.26, which affirms that the catechists' catechetical methodology relative to integration is moderately effective. It shows that catechists integrate a variety of authentic sources of the church in teaching. They likewise integrate social issues, life-experiences, the life of the saints, and the like which encourage students' participation in class. This method employed by the catechists helps them meet the basic

goal of pedagogy of faith among the students, the Life Integration [12]. The catechists do not only fill in the minds of students with the knowledge of Catholic Doctrines but challenge them to live out in their daily lives the message of God. For some students, they perceived positively how this method of integration is helpful in their life, especially in giving importance to prayer. They also appreciate listening to the Word of God, which challenges them to be better persons by following the teachings of Jesus. However, contradictory opinions from some students were also revealed on what is happening in their school. Some of them claimed that this method was not fully employed by their catechists.

Table 10. Effectiveness of the catechists' methodology relative to Inculturation

Items	WM	VI
6. The catechist uses images and symbols that are indigenous to Philippine culture in expressing the Christian message.	3.95	ME
7. The catechist tries to know our deeper knowledge, understanding, and relationship with Jesus.	4.30	ME
8. The catechist uses authentic Filipino cultural values, attitudes, and practices in light with the teaching of Jesus.	4.20	ME
9. The catechist communicates the Word of God in a more personal way.	4.32	ME
10. The catechist uses the Filipino language to easily explain the Good News.	4.44	ME
Composite Mean:	4.24	ME

Note: *Moderately Effectively (ME)*

It can be gleaned from the table that the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.24, which affirms that the catechists' catechetical methodology relative to inculturation is moderately effective in the learning process of the students. They give high regard to the catechists' preferred language in catechizing. Using the Filipino language in teaching makes the Word of God alive and have more sense in their life. Another advantage of using the Filipino language is that catechists could explain the lesson well while the students could express their feelings and emotions easier in class. The students also feel the personal approach of catechists in communicating who God is by letting the catechists know the status of their faith-life. Students also find it more interesting to learn in Religion subject whenever the catechist uses Philippine images, symbols, values, culture, attitude, and practices in transmitting the

Word of God in class. However, some observations were revealed by some students who claimed that this method was not regularly performed by their catechists.

Results revealed in Table 11 that the students' responses got a composite mean of 4.12, which affirms that the catechists' catechetical methodology relative to community-forming is moderately effective.

Table 11. Effectiveness of the catechists' methodology relative to Community-Forming

Items	WM	VI
11. The catechist gives us the opportunity to celebrate the Word of God as one community.	4.24	ME
12. The catechist gives us the task to conduct an outreach program to the needy.	3.79	ME
13. The catechist gives us a chance to have a day of recollection or weekend prayer.	4.17	ME
14. The catechist encourages us to join in different parish activities and organizations.	4.08	ME
15. The catechist invites us to celebrate the Holy Mass every Sunday.	4.31	ME
Composite Mean:	4.12	ME

Note: *Moderately Effectively (ME)*

The students affirm their catechists who always invite them to attend the Holy Mass every Sunday and to participate in parochial activities and organization. The data revealed that they did not experience to celebrate the Word of God in the classroom nor a weekend prayer. The students are aware of the importance of conducting an outreach program to the needy. However, they have not been given the chance to do this kind of service. Some of the students suggested implementing this kind of program to extend their help. Students have also expressed their desire to share and let the needy experience the love of God through this kind of service.

Generally, some of the catechists were able to observe the three methodological principles suggested by the NCDP [12], while others were not able to practice these. The three methodological principles were all moderately effective based on the assessment of the students. However, among the three, the Principles of Integration and Inculturation were commonly evident or quite used methods employed by the catechists, while the Principle of Community-Forming was either seldom or not performed by the catechists.

Among the demographic profile variables of the respondents in Table 12, the school where they study is

the only factor that had a significant difference in their knowledge of the Catholic Doctrine with a p-value of zero which is less than the 5 percent level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference in students' knowledge of the Catholic Doctrines in terms of Revelation, Faith, Jesus, Discipleship, Morality/Moral Life, Church, Sacraments, and Mary, Mother of Jesus when grouped according to school.

Table 12. Difference on the Assessment of Students' Knowledge of the Catechetical Doctrines when Grouped According to Profile Variables

Profile Variables	Computed F-values	p-values
Gender	0.435	0.664
Year Level	0.235	0.872
School	5.075	0.000
With or Without Catechesis	1.299	0.195
Family Background	0.380	0.684

It somehow implies that those schools providing catechesis to the students may have an impact on knowing and learning more about their Christian faith compared to those schools that do not devote time to teaching catechesis.

The data implies that students from sixteen (16) schools within Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa have different levels of knowledge on Catholic Doctrines depending on their school. It connotes the differences in culture and practices in each school that might affect the knowledge of students on different Catholic Doctrines. There is a difference in terms of schools, which indicates that having a Religion subject is a contributing factor to the students' knowledge of Catholic Doctrines.

Table 13. Relationship on the Students' Responses Between their Knowledge on the Catholic Doctrines and the Effectiveness of Catechetical Methodology

Variables	Computed F-values	p-values
Knowledge of Catholic Doctrines		
Effectiveness of Catechetical Methodology	0.287	0.000

It can be seen from the table that the assessment of the respondents on their knowledge of Catholic Doctrines and the effectiveness of catechetical methodology obtained a computed value of 0.287, with a p-value of zero which is less than the 5 percent level of significance.

Such a p-value led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that the knowledge of the respondents on the Catholic Doctrines is dependent on the effectiveness of catechetical methodology employed by the catechists.

Both the content on Catholic Doctrines and Catechetical Methodology must be given equal priority, according to Maningas [21]. To ensure that learning in catechesis is manifested, the religious educator/catechist must transmit the Word of God in a holistic approach [18]. In this regard, the religious educator/catechist must always update himself/herself not only with the knowledge to preach but also with the latest strategies in the delivery of instruction to make learning more fun and interesting for the students while incorporating the principles in teaching as suggested by the NCDP [12].

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The state of catechesis in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa has been facing various challenges that need to be addressed by the people concerned in this field. First, there are sixteen (16) public secondary schools under this vicariate, but only five (5) schools receive catechesis. Second, the number of catechists in the said vicariate are not enough to teach all the grade levels in all sixteen (16) schools. And third, at present, there is no official catechetical program available in the Archdiocese to be used in all vicariates.

In terms of knowledge, students have manifested almost the same understanding of the Catholic Doctrines to a great extent regardless of their gender, parental status, with or without Religion subject, and grade level. However, the schools where they study have a significant factor in assessing their present knowledge of their Christian faith.

In terms of methodology, the students' assessment showed that the catechists have followed the NCDP's catechetical principles in teaching such as being Integrated, Inculturated, and Community-Forming. Generally, the students' evaluation of the strategies employed by the catechists was found to be moderately effective. However, many students also claimed that some of the catechists do not employ in their class any of the strategies mentioned under each principle.

In determining the relationship between the students' knowledge of Catholic Doctrines and the effectiveness of catechetical methodology employed by the catechists, the results showed that the students' knowledge has a significant relationship with the catechists' teaching methodology. This suggests that if catechists could effectively apply and observe the methodological principles, the students' knowledge of Catholic

Doctrines would likewise increase.

With the gained insights from the results of the study, the researcher came up with the unified catechetical program for the secondary public schools in Vicariate 7 of the Archdiocese of Lipa.

Catechesis aims to send-forth the Word of God to inform, to form, and to transform students. These are different ways on how to deliver it in a creative and meaningful way. In public schools, catechesis has been continuously facing challenges in different aspects. Such challenges are addressed to the Bishop/Archbishop, parish priests, and catechists so they design plans that would meet the needs of the students and the catechists themselves.

Having a concrete plan of activities and lessons to be taught is necessary to fulfill the ministry of catechizing, especially in a classroom setting. The learning process provided in the catechetical program helps the catechists apply appropriate strategies and techniques in teaching the Catholic Doctrines to the students.

Since the recipients of the catechetical program are students from public secondary schools, it is highly applicable to use the vernacular language to help not only the catechists carry out the lessons better, but to help students understand the Catholic Doctrines easier so that it makes more sense in their lives.

To deliver the catechetical program meaningfully, a series of catechetical seminars or training for the catechists will be conducted to discuss its content and methodology. Such seminars and training will give the catechists an overview of the topics that they will teach for each year level. Catechists will also familiarize themselves with various methodologies that they could apply in teaching to meet the needs of the students.

Since the study focused on the challenges in the classroom setting, future researchers who will conduct the same study may include other concerns in catechesis such as administrative issues and catechists' concerns. Moreover, they may also re-articulate the catechetical program, particularly by examining its contents and methodology. They may include a wider scope or other areas in the Catholic Doctrines which were not included in the present program.

The Bishop/Archbishop, parish priests, coordinators, and catechists may collaborate to discuss the necessary support needed in the implementation of the program, such as financial support. The program is recommended to be implemented for four, years and will be evaluated annually by the assigned committee in this field. Necessary comments and suggestions by the persons-in-charge will be used in modifying and enriching the

contents of the said program.

To further enhance the findings of this study, future researchers may use other tools in assessing or measuring the knowledge of the students in Catholic Doctrines, as well as the effectiveness of Catechetical Methodology. Likewise, researchers may look at other areas of concern that cater to the development of catechesis in public schools.

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