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Ministering to Adult Learners

A Skills Workbook for
Christian Educational Leaders

Catholic Church - Education



Jane Wolford Hughes, Editor

Task Force to the National Advisory Committee for Adult Carechesis
Department of Education
United States Catholic Conference





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A project funded by the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education-CCD.



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FOREWORD

One of the commonplaces in Catholic education over the past decade is that our real need lies in the field of adult education. It is there we need to expand our energies; it is there we need to blaze new trails.

Another commonplace in Catholic education over the past 10 years is that really successful adult education programs, in spite of the educators' best efforts, are few and far between. The reason for such frequent lack of success may be, in part, that we don't yet know enough about adult education, and, in part, that we don't yet know enough about adult educators.

This *Workbook* attempts to do something about the second deficiency. It is not a book on how to do adult education, nor on what kinds of subject matter to offer in adult education, but rather on what skills it is important for educators to have in working with adults. It is not a "how" book or a "what" book, but a "who" book. Moreover, it is not directed only to those persons who "teach" adults, but to all who work with adults in any kind of learning situation: staff development, administration, planning, liturgy training, and the like. One might say that its purpose is to draw an outline of the kinds of Christian persons who are adult enough to help other adult Christians to grow.

The presuppositions of the *Workbook* are manifold. The first is that one person can help another to learn and so to grow. Another is that such assistance is in accord with, and even demanded by, our Christian faith. Still others are that these skills in assistance can be learned and increased, that they form an organized complex of human and supernatural talents, and that they can be used in an almost unlimited variety of ways. What is offered here, therefore, is not only hope for those to whom various kinds of adult education is directed, but also an adventure for those who provide and direct it.

In *Catechesi Tradendae* (No. 43), Pope John Paul II tells us that the catechesis (i.e., ongoing Christian education) of adults is the principal form of catechesis. That being so, those who engage in adult catechesis perform a highly important ministry for the Church. Whatever contributes to the

growth and development of such catechists makes an important contribution to the life of the Church. Therefore, this is an important book.

Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk
Chairman, Committee on Education
United States Catholic Conference

PREFACE

When I was appointed the Representative for Adult Education at the United States Catholic Conference in October of 1978, it became my responsibility and privilege to serve on the task force that produced this publication. I can honestly say that I have never worked with a more dedicated and competent group of people. *Ministering to Adult Learners* is the result of their hard work and strong commitment to the Church's ministry of adult education.

Competency profiles are a growing phenomenon in the field of adult education. While pursuing graduate studies, I benefited greatly from a competency profile. Although it was not directed toward adult religious education, it nevertheless enabled me to shape my degree program and to assess my levels of competency in general adult education programming. *Ministering to Adult Learners* should provide equal help to all those in the Church who work with adults in various learning situations.

With the publication of this *Workbook*, I would like to pay special tribute to the National Conference of Diocesan Directors (NCDD), whose generous grant made this publication possible. Since its beginning, NCDD has been a visionary leader in the field of catechesis, and its funding is yet another example of its commitment to excellence in religious education ministry.

Ministering to Adult Learners is a reality because of the prodigious effort of Jane Wolford Hughes. She served as the project's director and as its major writer and editor. Frequently, she had to coordinate activities among task force members who were not only separated by distance, but also had conflicting professional schedules. Nevertheless, she pressed ahead, despite these difficulties and her own heavy responsibilities as Director of the Institute for Continuing Education for the Archdiocese of Detroit. We who served on the task force benefited immeasurably from her skillful leadership and her personal dedication to the project.

Lastly, I would like to thank the National Advisory Committee for Adult Catechesis. It was the pioneering work of this committee in developing

the Critical Issues Report that led to this project. It continually offered encouragement and guidance, and its executive committee provided valuable assistance, especially during the latter stages of the project.

It is the sincere hope of the United States Catholic Conference that this workbook will greatly assist those who work with adult learners to grow in their own abilities as ministers of God's Word.

Neil A. Parent
*Representative for Adult
Education*
Department of Education, USCC
Washington, D.C.

INTRODUCTION

Ministering to Adult Learners grew out of an earlier project sponsored by the United States Catholic Conference which focused on the development of leadership in adult catechesis. In the beginning, it was intended that the *Workbook* would serve adult education specialists. However, because of the findings of the task force and strong requests from other groups working with adults, it has now been broadened to give direction to persons of any Christian denomination who engage adults in learning activities.

The task force worked to clarify and isolate the complexity of roles of the adult educator in the parish and diocese. There emerged three distinct groups of competencies related to the role usually held by the adult education practitioner: Teacher/Facilitator, Program Planner, and Administrator. In addition, there surfaced sharply and strongly a group of characteristics related to the person as minister. They are identified in the *Workbook* under the title of Person of Faith and are deeply integral to the person since they bring the faith and the spiritual dimension to the roles listed.

By the spring of 1979, the task force was ready to test the interim *Workbook* among a more diverse group of persons involved with the adult learner. The competencies relating to the roles of Teacher/Facilitator, Program Planner, and Administrator/Manager, and the descriptive qualities of the Person of Faith were sent to over 150 people working with adult learners in dioceses, parishes, and institutions. The response was generally favorable, in some instances enthusiastic.

The editing of the final document respected the recommendations and priorities of the test group, as well as the need for strengthening areas that had been considered weak in the interim draft.

Ministering to Adult Learners is the first known attempt to integrate adult education competencies with Christian ministry. However, it should be understood that it is the dimension of faith and the context of the believing community that translates the other professional competencies into skills of ministry. In other words, what distinguishes this competency profile from others is the conviction that these skills are rooted in Christian discipleship and exercised in service to and by the community of believers.

It is the task force's hope that this *Workbook* will help all interested ministers to broaden and deepen their awareness of the skills needed to work effectively with adult learners, to help them more accurately gauge the degree to which they possess these competencies, and to point the direction for personal growth.

The task force became more and more conscious that in this almost overwhelming challenge, it did not have all the answers. As the practice of adult religious education — in all of its forms — becomes more refined, this *Workbook* can serve as a base while the competencies now listed are clarified and developed according to the wisdom and call of the day. *Ministering to Adult Learners* is a beginning, not a final product.

The Task Force

The task force for *Ministering to Adult Learners* was composed of four experienced adult religious educators whose pioneer work has influenced the adult religious education movement in the United States — and especially their home dioceses of Orlando, Louisville, Paterson, N.J., and Detroit. Also working as a member of the task force has been the Adult Education Representative of the United States Catholic Conference: first, Tom Tewey, followed by Neil Parent. In addition, the group was exceedingly fortunate to have the eminent adult educator, Dr. Malcolm Knowles, as consultant. He brought confidence, sophistication, vision, and support to the project.

Jane Wolford Hughes,
Editor and Task Force Chairperson

Task Force Members:

Tom Downs

Peter Houck

Maureen Shaughnessy, S.C.

Neil Parent

Tom Tewey

Malcolm Knowles, Consultant

1.

Rationale For Ministering to Adult Learners

One of the major educational challenges of the Church in the coming decade is in defining and increasing the competencies of those who work with adults as learners. These persons include more than the group with the title of "adult educators." In fact, each person involved in teaching adults is, in practice, an adult educator, at least part of the time. For example, the religious education coordinator works with adult catechists.

As another illustration, the principal of the school, whose concern is educating young people, is responsible for the in-service training of the teachers and meeting with parents' groups. We don't have to look far to find many others. Liturgical groups, justice-and-peace committees, parish councils, and social service agencies all work with adults, often in the role of teacher or facilitator. The pastor and minister assume many roles of the adult education practitioner: policy maker, administrator, program planner, and teacher in learning opportunities for adults. Each person so involved would profit from an increased competency as an adult education practitioner.

The rewards are many beyond the basic one of doing a better job. One of the most gratifying is the expanded response and enthusiasm on the part of the adults they serve. The adult learners might not be able to define the difference in the learning experiences, but they will know there *is* a difference and show a greater desire to participate. Another benefit is that many adult education competencies can be applied beyond the ministry to the adult learner, such as organizing and conducting committee meetings, counseling, conflict resolution, etc. Success will go to those who develop a deliberate strategy for increasing their competencies. This *Workbook* should be of help.

Over the years, several studies have been made which have defined three broad areas important to the functioning of the practitioner: (1) understanding of the field of adult education, (2) understanding of adults as learners, and (3) personal qualities such as good interpersonal relations, commitment to lifelong learning, and creativity. Within those areas are a wide variety of competencies. To help the adult educator get a better grasp, *Ministering to Adult Learners* has isolated specific competencies integral to three distinct roles which encompass the above areas. Each person ministering to the

adult learner assumes one or more of the following roles: (1) Teacher/Facilitator; (2) Program Planner; and (3) Administrator. *Ministering to Adult Learners* also will attempt to examine a fourth aspect of the adult religious educator that centers in the spiritual dimension of the minister and that defines the minister as a follower of Christ: Person of Faith.

This *Workbook* can be of benefit to everyone working with adults as learners. It is designed for those who do not see themselves as adult education practitioners, and for those who do. For the most part, even those who have the title "adult educator" today entered the field in the past five or seven years. They have come to their work from different backgrounds and disciplines, and accompanying this diversity is the lack of a common language and shared educational experiences. Most practitioners gain their capability through informal sources, experience on the job, and personal study. Except for those with formal education, the majority lack a clear understanding of the competencies needed to increase their effectiveness, both in their job performance and as advocates and prophets of adult religious education. Even in the case of those formally educated, there are nuances and specific competencies required of those who work within the Church, which suggest that this *Workbook* would be helpful to them as well. Finally, this *Workbook* can be of help in furthering the development of the discipline of adult religious education in the Church.

In our times, the Church has come out strongly backing adult religious education. Its statements place it at the core of the educational mission of the Church and as an essential element of the continuum of lifelong learning. However, while it is vigorous in a few parts of the country, there has been no great general surge of the adult religious education movement. This is despite the policy statements made in *To Teach as Jesus Did* in 1972 and the *National Catechetical Directory, Sharing the Light of Faith*, which reaffirmed the policy in 1979.

Several factors lurk behind the lagging movement in the Church which coexists with adult education successfully operating in the secular world. There is a whole chain of causes, and, in most situations, each is linked to the others. An obvious impediment to faster momentum is the lack of

trained personnel. There is a limited number of paid full-time or even part-time adult education positions in the parishes — or dioceses, for that matter. This *Workbook* should clarify for the potential and present adult religious educator the kind of characteristics and competencies required of those working with adults as learners. It has been proven that when practitioners increase their knowledge and skills, they provide more effective programming for the adult learner — to which the adult responds more readily. Interest peaks. Adult religious education has a chance to be accepted as an ongoing commitment.

A second factor holding the adult religious education movement back is the Church's traditional posture of teaching adults with the same educational philosophy it uses to teach children. This philosophy is not designed to free adults to be self-directed learners in their faith. For adult religious education to flourish, there must be a recognition that teaching adults is a separate and distinctly different discipline of education. Church leaders must recognize that the self-questing adult will indeed reach a maturity of faith and commitment to the call of Christ. This could never be realized by one who remains as a child in faith development. In fact, adult catechesis is the only way to a mature Church and personal conversion.

A third problem area—reflective of the first two—is finances. Adult education budget allotments, in comparison with other diocesan or parish budgets, are not realistic. In some instances, they are non-existent or pitifully meager. However, in those places where the practitioner is skilled and adult programming has come alive, the financial picture is brighter. But this is not without some cloudiness. It is the rare situation where the budget is even adequate to meet the expressed needs of the people.

The fourth impediment is the lack of knowledge of those on the policy and hiring levels about the kind of person needed to assume the job of the adult education practitioner, and what his/her potential competencies should be. In the past, it has been all-too-often the pattern that the person hired for adult education was a specialist in theology or religious education with only a vague notion of adult education principles. And to add to this

weakness, other job responsibilities were assigned to adult educators as well. Fragmentation was inevitable and the "part-timeness" of their concentration, coupled with their lack of expertise, prevented a fully developed adult religious education program from emerging. When little "happened," the administrator was convinced that the people really weren't "ready for adult education yet." Budgets were cut, and the cycle continued.

It is safe to say that little will "happen" in adult religious education without committed, competent adult educators working with a fair amount of freedom and at least a moderate budget. But the bottom line is both a committed, *competent* adult educator and a Church *committed* to the development of adult faith communities.

2.

How To Use This Workbook

I. The Characteristics of the Person of Faith

You will note that the unique qualities of the Person of Faith are listed as characteristics rather than competencies. They are not measurable in the same sense that competencies are, and they are integral to the person called to ministry. The listing is stating an *ideal* toward which the ministers can work. As an ideal, the ministers should not be unduly upset if, in their humanness, they are weak in some areas of the characteristics. Also, the task force recognizes that there may be other characteristics which, in a given situation, may be of significant importance. The listing is a thoroughly studied guide, but does not presume to be a fully comprehensive description.

It is suggested that the ministers reflect upon the characteristics listed to help draw their own lives into focus as Persons of Faith and record through the accompanying journal form the characteristics' presence and meaning in their lives. If the minister is working with a colleague-evaluator on this *Workbook*, the characteristics of the Person of Faith could be an opportunity for faith-sharing and mutual growth.

Organization of the Worksheet

The worksheet for the characteristics of the Person of Faith consists of four vertical columns with each of the characteristics listed horizontally in the far left column. The characteristics are spaced so as to allow sufficient room for journal-type entries.

In column A, the reader is invited to reflect on his or her life of faith (in writing) in relation to each of the listed characteristics.

Column B provides space for the reader to describe the steps or course of action for improving in each of the characteristics of faith.

Finally, column C is for recording those aspects of the entries in columns A and B that the reader would find beneficial sharing with another person. This might be a mentor, a spiritual director, a friend, mate, or supervisor — in a word, an individual or several people whom the reader feels could

be of special assistance in his or her growth as a minister.

II. The Roles of Teacher/Facilitator, Program Planner, and Administrator

An attempt has been made in this *Workbook* to give a vision of what competencies are needed for the effective and responsible performance of the roles of minister to the adult learner. It is meant to be a *positive* impetus to growth and definition of the roles. The competencies listed for the roles are attainable. However, certain assumptions can be made:

1. Normally each person should expect to achieve a greater mastery in a single role — especially if there is greater emphasis and need placed on that role in the person's work performance.
2. No one is expected to have complete mastery of all.
3. *Everyone*, no matter how skilled, has room for growth.

Organization of the Worksheet

The worksheet is organized into columns horizontally with the competencies for the role listed vertically (see page 18). In the columns across the two pages, the adult education practitioners record their personal analysis about each competency. The following should be of help in interpreting the columns and scales within the columns:

Column A. Importance to Ministry or Self-esteem:

Competency to be judged in light of its importance to the individual in his/her present work.

Column B. Level of Present Development:

The graduations in competencies are scaled to mean:

1. None: little or no ability.
2. Basic: some beginning ability.
3. Competent: adequate ability.
4. Proficient: high degree of ability.

Column C. Level of Present Priority:

The individual should determine if attention needs to be given this competency immediately, in the future, or possibly not at all.

Column D. Plan for Growth:

Once the person notes how significant his/her mastery of each competency is, it is recommended that a plan be set down for growth in and/or mastery of a given competency. The plan should take into consideration data gathered in columns A-C. It is feasible that several competencies can be developed and integrated through the same plan. The plan should include both *what* is to be done and the realistic *time frame* in which it can be accomplished.

In keeping with the philosophy of adult education, the Plan for Growth should provide opportunity for self-direction in self-analysis and setting of priorities. It needs to be as free of outside pressure as possible.

Column E. Personal Evaluation:

Space to indicate self-appraisal of the accomplishment of the Plan for Growth midway through the plan and at the predicted finish date.

Column F. Elements for Sharing:

Remarks recorded in this column would come as a result of dialogue and/or evaluation on the part of another person. This person could be any objective person: a mentor, a teacher, or a colleague. With the latter, the two may choose to evaluate each other and, in the process, provide mutual support, building the community so necessary to those in ministry.

3.

Ministers to Adult Learners as Persons of Faith

It is true of all who serve the Church: Persons involved in ministering to the adult learner are called to be first and foremost Persons of Faith. They must be committed to Jesus Christ and to the Church they serve. Their belief, life style, and professional direction should be integrated toward enabling adults to achieve their fullness as mature Christians: to proclaim the Kingdom, to celebrate it through Word and sacrament, and to serve others in charity and justice.

It is especially and essentially these characteristics of the Person of Faith that set apart those who are ministering from those who are involved in a job.

Characteristics of the Person of Faith:

1. Recognizes faith as a gift from God.
2. Motivated by the belief that he/she is called to live as authentically as Jesus lived.
3. Committed to personal and communal prayer on a regular basis.
4. Uses the Scriptures as a source of spiritual nourishment.
5. Able to apply the Scriptures to a variety of learning situations.
6. Understands and accepts his/her ministerial role, particularly within the institutional Church.
7. Demonstrates a personal Christian value system integrated with behavior, so as to easily be identified as a leader in the Christian community.
8. By one's own faith commitment, enables others to reflect upon their faith journey and discover their possibilities of growth.
9. Freely chooses to live the social-justice demands of the Gospel.
10. Articulates the social teachings of the Church, particularly as stated in recent Church documents.
11. Understands the roles and importance of public ritual, sacramental preparation, and the communal dimensions of faith.
12. Fosters development of a faith community among the learners.
13. Demonstrates commitment and understanding of the Church, its history, polity, and doctrine.
14. Searches for greater personal understanding of faith.
15. Respects one's own limitations, and those of others, based on the recognition that God's work is ongoing; does not depend solely on oneself.
16. Situates one's ministry in the framework of a continued conscious living in a world striving for wholeness and unity.
17. Handles one's loneliness constructively and creatively.
18. Does not take oneself too seriously, viewing life with a sense of humor.

NAME _____ DATE _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS OF FAITH	In regard to this characteristic, I find myself . . .
1. Recognizes faith as a gift from God.	
2. Motivated by the belief that he/she is called to live as authentically as Jesus lived.	
3. Committed to personal and communal prayer on a regular basis.	
4. Uses the Scriptures as a source of spiritual nourishment.	
5. Able to apply the Scriptures to a variety of learning situations.	
6. Understands and accepts his/her ministerial role, particularly within the institutional Church.	
7. Demonstrates a personal Christian value system integrated with behavior, so as to easily be identified as a leader in the Christian community.	
8. By one's own faith commitment, enables others to reflect upon their faith journey and discover their possibilities of growth.	
9. Freely chooses to live the social-justice demands of the Gospel.	

Knowing myself, how can I improve in this characteristic?	In regard to this characteristic, I can share the following:

NAME _____ DATE _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS OF FAITH	In regard to this characteristic, I find myself . . .
10. Articulates the social teachings of the Church, particularly as stated in recent Church documents.	
11. Understands the roles and importance of public ritual, sacramental preparation, and the communal dimensions of faith.	
12. Fosters development of a faith community among the learners.	
13. Demonstrates commitment and understanding of the Church, its history, polity, and doctrine.	
14. Searches for greater personal understanding of faith.	
15. Respects one's own limitations, and those of others, based on the recognition that God's work is ongoing; and does not depend solely on oneself.	
16. Situates one's ministry in the framework of a continued conscious living in a world striving for wholeness and unity.	
17. Handles one's loneliness constructively and creatively.	
18. Does not take oneself too seriously, viewing life with a sense of humor.	

Knowing myself, how can I improve in this characteristic?	In regard to this characteristic, I can share the following:

NOTES

4.

Ministers to Adult Learners as Teachers/Facilitators

As Teacher/Facilitator, the minister is one who actually engages the learners in the learning design, either as the resource person (teacher) or as the person who arranges and conducts the learning process (facilitator).

Among the important challenges of this role are the need for knowledge of the faith, effective communication skills, sensitivity to interpersonal dynamics, and the ability to foster Christian community among the learners.

It is as Teacher/Facilitator that the adult educator most closely approaches the ministerial role of catechist. In this capacity, he or she is responsible for either directly presenting some facet of the Christian faith, or in serving as a catalyst or guide to the learners as they seek to deepen their faith.

This role requires respect and understanding of personhood, together with the knowledge and understanding of:

- adult learning theory and research.
- adult learning needs.
- adult learning techniques and strategies.
- stages of adult growth.
- characteristics of the participant/learner.

Competencies for the Teacher/Facilitator

Ability to:

1. Establish a warm, mutually respectful, and trusting relationship with adult learners.
2. Understand and respect the needs, interests, motivations, capacities, and characteristics of adults as learners.
3. Understand the learners' own values and beliefs, and use them as a starting point for further learning and spiritual growth.
4. Understand and appreciate the adult-learning implications of culture, age, and economic background.
5. Explain the conceptual differences between didactic instruction and self-directed learning.
6. Guide learners in formulating goals, objectives, and direction of growth in terms that are meaningful to them.

7. Help the learners discern the unique gifts they bring to the learning experience.
8. Apply appropriate knowledge in subject under study.
9. Understand and appreciate life situations in which new learning will be applied.
10. Use skills in communication and group dynamics.
11. Assist the learner to plan, conduct, and evaluate learning activities using a combination of methods and techniques to ensure meaningful outcomes.
12. Set an example of personal commitment to lifelong learning.
13. Engage learners in evaluation of the learning experience.
14. Evaluate one's own performance in a learning experience.
15. Know where to locate and how to use educational materials.
16. Deal with varying situations with flexibility, patience, practicality, and humor.

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPETENCIES FOR TEACHERS/FACILITATORS	A Importance of ministry or self-esteem				B Level of present development				C Level of present priority			
	none	low	medium	high	none	basic	competent	proficient	none	low	medium	high
Should have the ability to:												
1. Establish a warm, mutually respectful, and trusting relationship with adult learners.												
2. Understand and respect the needs, interests, motivations, capacities, and characteristics of adults as learners.												
3. Understand the learners' own values and beliefs, and use them as a starting point for further learning and spiritual growth.												
4. Understand and appreciate the adult-learning implications of culture, age, and economic background.												
5. Explain the conceptual differences between didactic instruction and self-directed learning.												
6. Guide learners in formulating goals, objectives, and direction of growth in terms that are meaningful to them.												
7. Help the learners discern the unique gifts they bring to the learning experience.												
8. Apply appropriate knowledge in subject under study.												

NAME _____

DATE _____

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	none	low	medium	high	none	basic	competent	proficient	none	low	medium	high
Should have the ability to:												
9. Understand and appreciate life situations in which new learning will be applied.												
10. Use skills in communication and group dynamics.												
11. Assist the learner to plan, conduct, and evaluate learning activities using a combination of methods and techniques to ensure meaningful outcomes.												
12. Set an example of personal commitment to lifelong learning.												
13. Engage learners in evaluation of the learning experience.												
14. Evaluate one's own performance in a learning experience.												
15. Know where to locate and how to use educational materials.												
16. Deal with varying situations with flexibility, patience, practicality, and humor.												

NOTES

5.

Ministers to Adult Learners as Program Planners

As Program Planner, the minister is responsible for directing/coordinating the establishment of a context for adult learning, and planning activities for specific programs. The unique challenge of planning adult programs is one of *collaboratively* setting program goals and learning objectives, surveying alternative learning activities, organizing resources and personnel, and evaluating for future learning. In all of this, the planner must integrate the needs of self-directed learners, the society and world in which learners live, and the goals of the Church/institution in which the planning/learning occurs.

Competencies for Program Planner

Ability to:

1. Describe the current theories of adult learning and their implications for the selection of methods, techniques, and materials.
2. Provide a rationale for selecting a particular method, technique, or material for achieving a specific educational objective.
3. Understand the theories and research of human development as they relate to adult growth and growth in faith, and their applications to program design.
4. Describe the Church's mission for adult catechesis, especially as it is articulated in recent Church documents.
5. Plan effectively with and through others, sharing decision-making responsibilities.
6. Incorporate the philosophy and goals of the diocese/parish/institution in development of adult catechetical programs.
7. Understand and appreciate the program-design implications of culture, age, and economic background.
8. Create a physical and psychological climate of comfort, openness, and trust.
9. Design and use data-gathering instruments.
10. Identify and select human and material resources appropriate to the learning design.
11. Design programs that will assist adults in becoming increasingly self-directed in their learning.
12. Evaluate learning procedures and outcomes from both program-planner and participant perspectives.
13. Describe the ways in which parish community life relates to and affects adult catechesis.
14. Incorporate liturgical experiences and service opportunities as integral components of adult catechesis.
15. Design retreats and other similar reflective, prayerful experiences.

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPETENCIES FOR PROGRAM PLANNERS	A Importance of ministry or self-esteem				B Level of present development				C Level of present priority			
	none	low	medium	high	none	basic	competent	proficient	none	low	medium	high
Should have the ability to:												
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14. Incorporate liturgical experiences and service opportunities as integral components of adult catechesis.												
15. Design retreats and other similar reflective, prayerful experiences.												

D Plan for growth (What I will do and when I will do it)	E I evaluate my results	F Evaluation of another person

NOTES

6.

Ministers to Adult Learners as Administrators

As Administrator, the minister to adult learners should understand and be committed to the mission, objectives, and strategies of adult religious education in the broad sense and how it relates, specifically, to the local church which he/she serves. The Administrator has the lead responsibility for effectively establishing the overall adult learning context and programming in the diocese/parish. These are achieved through the integration of two areas of accountability:

1. Relationships with:

- a. those who set the direction for adult learning opportunities, i.e., the policy makers and/or the program planners.
- b. those responsible for implementing the learning, i.e., the teachers/facilitators.
- c. those who are the potential learners.

2. Basic Tasks:

- a. setting objectives
- b. organizing
- c. motivating/communicating
- d. evaluating
- e. developing and managing budget
- f. developing staff

Competencies for the Administrator

Ability to:

1. Apply the appropriate leadership style to a given situation.
2. Recruit, train, support, and utilize volunteers and paid staff.
3. Provide the staff opportunities for faith and professional development.
4. Engage staff in performance evaluation.
5. Manage organizational and interpersonal conflict.
6. Utilize alternative problem-solving and decision-making procedures helpful to individuals and groups (e.g., brainstorming, gestalt, force field analysis, rank ordering, paired weighting, etc.).
7. Evaluate organizational effectiveness and guide the organization's continuous renewal process.
8. Select and effectively use consultants and planning groups such as ad hoc committees, advisory councils, and task forces.

9. Provide a rationale for selecting a particular planning approach.
10. Describe the societal problems and needs that affect the Church's educational mission.
11. Establish and maintain good interpersonal relations with policy-making persons in order to gain their cooperation in direction and implementation of adult catechesis.
12. Formulate policies that clearly convey the religious, philosophical, and educational commitments of the diocese/parish.
13. Utilize management styles and strategies congruent with the Gospel principles.
14. Design and monitor budgets.
15. Speak and write effectively in order to communicate with people of varied backgrounds and interests.
16. Promote policies and market programs.
17. Describe current developments in catechetical ministry and resource materials in other dioceses, churches, cultures, and organizations.
18. Identify sources of funding and prepare applications for funding inside and outside the Church.
19. Obtain and interpret relevant data on social and demographic trends of the community.
20. Work collaboratively with other organizations/agencies in the diocese/parish pertinent to the catechetical ministry (e.g., liturgical and social-justice ministries).

COMPETENCIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS	A Importance of ministry or self-esteem				B Level of present development				C Level of present priority			
	none	low	medium	high	none	basic	competent	proficient	none	low	medium	high
Should have the ability to:												
1. Apply the appropriate leadership style to a given situation.												
2. Recruit, train, support, and utilize volunteers and paid staff.												
3. Provide the staff opportunities for faith and professional development.												
4. Engage staff in performance evaluation.												
5. Manage organizational and interpersonal conflict.												
6. Utilize alternative problem-solving and decision-making procedures helpful to individuals and groups (e.g., brainstorming, gestalt, force field analysis, rank ordering, paired weighting, etc.).												
7. Evaluate organizational effectiveness and guide the organization's continuous renewal process.												

D Plan for growth (What I will do and when I will do it)	E I evaluate my results	F Evaluation of another person

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPETENCIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS	A Importance of ministry or self-esteem				B Level of present development				C Level of present priority			
	none	low	medium	high	none	basic	competent	proficient	none	low	medium	high
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NOTES

7.

Uses of Ministering to Adult Learners

I. By Individuals

Ministering to Adult Learners offers suggestions for all practitioners who work with adults in learning situations, regardless of their backgrounds or titles. It also can be of help to all those who hire practitioners or who are responsible for offices, committees, or agencies that deal with the adult learner. Listed below are some ways the *Workbook* can be used:

1. An individual practitioner can use the *Workbook* to assess his/her personal competencies, identify desirable areas of growth, and design a plan to achieve the possible growth.
2. A bishop, pastor, minister, education director, or other administrator interested in hiring personnel to work with the adult learner can use the *Workbook* in preparing job descriptions, setting hiring criteria, and subsequently in evaluating job performance.
3. A diocesan leader involved in training paraprofessionals and volunteers can use the *Workbook* in planning workshops to increase the competencies of those persons working with the adult as learner.
4. A diocesan leader involved in staff development can use the *Workbook* to identify topics for workshops and to encourage staff persons in their self-directed development.
5. A curriculum planner in an institution of higher learning or other agency working with diocesan leadership can use the *Workbook* to adjust and/or suggest continuing education and credit courses to meet the needs of diocesan personnel who wish to increase their capabilities.
6. A Seminary Academic Dean or Director of Continuing Education of Clergy can use the *Workbook* in designing courses, workshops, and seminars to increase awareness and develop competencies in the various practitioner roles.

II. By Adult Education Practitioner Groups

The *Workbook* can be a practical and challenging tool for use in groups concerned with developing expertise in the art and practice of adult religious education. In the following text, we focus our attention on three basic models where the *Workbook* and Bibliography may be especially appropriate and helpful: the network model, the learning community model, and the seminar model.

Network Learning Model

A network describes a group of people who agree to meet and/or share regularly in a specific area of personal or professional interest. It is a loose affiliation of people who enter or leave the network at will and who are bound together primarily by the support and resources they bring to each other. Since the relationships among such people are usually only occasional and intermittent, networks can include large numbers of people from varying geographical areas. While some meetings may take place, much of the resourcing can be done by mailings. However, small groups within the network can take the initiative to meet on a topic specific to their own interests.

Ministering to Adult Learners can provide a valuable resource to any network of people involved with adults as learners. The description of the Person of Faith and the roles of Teacher/Facilitator, Program Planner, and Administrator offer four areas in which adult education practitioners have important mutual interests and needs. The individual competencies suggest many more topics around which the network practitioners can meet, dialogue, and learn.

Not only diocesan but also national networks likely will benefit from the integrating and organizing effects such a *Workbook* can provide for its members. With these roles and competencies defined, resource publications can be developed in a systematic fashion that will respond to the needs of the adult education practitioner.

At meetings or conventions of the network members, sessions can bring together people especially interested in one of the roles. A more targeted common sharing and defining can take place. Indeed, all three roles and the description of the essential characteristics of the Person of Faith can be probed, defined, and redefined at such a gathering. Thus, a more holistic view of the profession and practice of adult religious education can be developed.

Learning Community Model

A learning community is a group of people with similar interests who gather together regularly for the purpose of learning and mutual growth. *Ministering to Adult Learners* can be useful for such a group as a kind of road map or curriculum guide for a learning community's journey together.

With the *Workbook*, the learning community can plan together which role areas or items of competency they wish to explore in common. Each participant can choose one in which he/she excels, has background, or has interest, and function as the leader-resource person for the group during the session on that particular item.

Or, a "learning community matrix" can be designed where a list of items is rated by each member of the group. When the results are shared in a matrix (list of items down, names of individuals across), the entire group can see how other members rate themselves. If some members perceive others in different ways than self-scored (whether higher or lower), mutual feedback can be given to help each other develop a more accurate self-assessment in regard to these competencies.

Such a matrix will also point to specific proficiencies in which the group as a whole may excel or need attention. Those who have scored themselves higher could be the ones to lead a session, or it may be that an outside specialist would need to be called in.

New members to such a learning community can more easily be oriented and integrated into the group through the use of the *Workbook*. One can quickly identify not only one's own self-perceived

status, but also the development of the group. This is facilitated if a log of meetings is kept which a new member can refer to in tracking the learning of the group. In areas of special need or interest, a new member can contact a proficient member for personal tutoring.

Finally, a "resource data bank" can be developed by the group around the roles and competencies outlined in *Ministering to Adult Learners*.

Seminar Learning Model

The seminar, institute, workshop, or convention provides an excellent opportunity for the use of *Ministering to Adult Learners*. Session planners can design sessions around one, several, or many specific roles and competencies. If participants are given the opportunity to diagnose their own needs ahead of the seminar, and even mutually plan the sessions, these items can effectively help focus on areas of real interest, inquiry, and need.

In using the *Workbook* prior to the event, respondents might rate themselves in terms of self-perceived competency and those items showing the least proficiency may be utilized as areas of study. Or, respondents might rate items in terms of personal interest, and those manifesting the greatest degree of interest would be chosen. The planners should make it clear to the respondents which method of rating they are seeking.

During such an event, the *Workbook* probably should *not* be used in its entirety. "Competency overload" may result and so frustrate the participants with the *Workbook's* seeming extensiveness and complexity that confusion and negative motivation may result. Participants, learners, and leaders should refine their selection to no more than three to five alternatives for each learning session during such an event, and they can choose from among these if a specific one is desired.

After the event, the entire *Workbook* might be used by the participants to discern future directions for growth and development, and possibly to determine the focus for similar events in the future.

The Bibliography—while extensive in length—is only a starter, a preliminary list of some helpful resources. A seminar participant will want to add to these lists, and in the process, organize his/her own compendium of background resources around those items of his/her special interest and concern. In this regard, the *Workbook* can serve as a frame of reference for anyone organizing personal and professional growth around these competencies. A seminar event can bring about a communal focusing on specific competencies, call forth an examination of the theories behind them, and further research on their development.

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- P6 *How to Use Role Playing*
- P7 *Supervision and Consultation*
- P8 *Training Group Leaders*
- P9 *Conducting Workshops and Institutes*
- P10 *Working with Volunteers*
- P11 *Conferences That Work*
- P12 *Getting and Keeping Members*
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**TASK FORCE TO THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT CATECHESIS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

Jane Wolford Hughes—Director of the Institute for Continuing Education for the Archdiocese of Detroit since its beginning 16 years ago, Jane Wolford Hughes is a nationally recognized speaker and workshop leader in adult education. She has edited numerous books on the subject. Mrs. Hughes is a member of the National Advisory Committee for Adult Catechesis and Adjunct Faculty at St. John's Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan.

Thomas Downs — The executive director of the Florida Council of Churches, Thomas Downs is the former director of adult education for the Diocese of Orlando, Florida. He is the author of several books including, *The Parish as a Learning Community*, and numerous articles on the subjects of parish community and adult learning.

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Sr. Maureen Shaughnessy, S.C.—Sr. Shaughnessy is the director for parish/community of faith development, Office of Evangelization-Catechesis in the Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey. Prior to this position, she was the assistant director responsible for adult education ministry within the diocese. For the past two years, Sr. Shaughnessy has served as the chairperson of the National Advisory Committee for the Adult Catechesis as well as for that body's Executive Committee.

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