



National Gathering on Christian Initiation™

A Conference for Catechumenal Ministers and Pastoral Leaders

Disciples Making Disciples
2017

July 5-6,
Chicago, IL



“When we gather together with a common mission and a common passion, we have the opportunity to learn, to network, to discover new ideas and ‘other ways’ of doing things. When we gather together, we are supported, encouraged, and affirmed in our efforts. When we gather together, we realize that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, bigger than our own community, bigger than our own parish.”

—D. Todd Williamson, Director, Office for Divine Worship, Archdiocese of Chicago



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“The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ will provide Christian initiation ministers the opportunity to share the best practices that they have developed and encourage each other to be bolder and more creative in the ways that they will bring the Good News of Christ to our parishes. We will see how others are, as the pope says, ‘filled with joy as they evangelize.’”

—**Michael Ruzicki, LTP Editor and Liturgical Training Consultant**

Mission

To promote the liturgical formation “of the faithful and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and their stage of religious development” so all the faithful may “become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy.”

—*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 19, 14

Misión

Promover la formación litúrgica “y la participación activa de los fieles en la liturgia, interna y externa, conforme a su edad, condición, género de vida y grado de cultura religiosa”, de modo que todos ellos “se impregnen totalmente del espíritu y de la fuerza de la liturgia”.

—*Constitución sobre la Sagrada Liturgia*, 19, 14

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Letter from the Director



We at Liturgy Training Publications are excited to host the **National Gathering on Christian Initiation™**. This event is one way that we continue to promote the full implementation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. LTP has long been a leader in providing training and

formation on the baptismal catechumenate through our publications. As we expand our work to fulfill our mission through the support and training of ministers, we continue to recognize the role of Christian initiation in the life of the parish and the life of the Church. Through the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the essential mission of the Church is lived out in the making and baptizing of disciples.

The **National Gathering on Christian Initiation™** invites participants to reflect on the ways in which the baptismal catechumenate serves as the model of the Church's catechizing and evangelizing activity. This new annual event is the culmination of two years of planning. Over that time, LTP has gathered and consulted with dozens of leaders in initiation ministry to develop an event that will effectively respond to current formational needs. We hope you can join us and encourage others to attend this event, where we will gather catechumenal ministers and pastoral leaders from around the country to explore the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and its implementation in the twenty-first century.

Sincerely,

Deanna M. Keefe
Acting Director and Editorial Director
Liturgy Training Publications



What Is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™?

The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ is an annual two-day conference for parish Christian initiation ministers and diocesan catechetical, liturgical, and evangelization leaders. Steeped in the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ seeks to promote the vision of the Church as constantly evangelizing, catechizing, and initiating disciples. Liturgy, evangelization, and catechesis are the foundational elements of the gathering. Throughout the conference, participants will explore the theoretical and practical aspects of initiation ministry, learn from interactive multimedia presentations, engage in prayerful reflection on the liturgies of the RCIA, and share their knowledge and experience with initiation ministers from around the country.



“In addition to offering education and formation, we hope the National Gathering will renew the energy of experienced ministers so they can hand it on to people new to initiation. There’s an enthusiasm that is unique to being with people who have a passion for the same thing. We hope we can spark that enthusiasm and send people out to share it.”

—Victoria M. Tufano, LTP Senior Editor and Liturgical Consultant



The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ will have two tracks. **Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers** will deepen and enrich their work as they gain practical skills, discuss common challenges, and share best practices. **Regional and Diocesan Trainers** will explore and discuss practical strategies for implementing effective training and formation in their local communities. The two groups will separate twice a day for deeper conversation as they focus on the needs and challenges of parish ministry and diocesan training and formation.

Theme: Disciples Making Disciples 2017

The theme for the 2017 National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ is Disciples Making Disciples. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* presents a vision for the Church that is constantly evangelizing, catechizing, and initiating people as Christian disciples. In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI stated that “the Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself” (15). The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ invites parish and diocesan leaders to reflect on discipleship—to consider the skills necessary in forming disciples, the role of the parish in evangelization, and the mission of the individual as a disciple. Those who attend NGCI will be nourished through prayer, will experience fellowship in community, and will learn from dynamic catechesis, all while recommitting themselves to the mission of the Church.



Photo © John Zich



Photo © John Zich

Goals of the 2017 Gathering

- Participants will understand that the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* is that of the parish as a community of disciples.
- Participants will better understand their own call to discipleship.
- Participants will understand the role of the baptismal catechumenate as the process for forming disciples.
- Participants will hone and develop the skills needed to lead groups in discussion and faith-sharing, as they discuss creative ways to relate their own stories and the catechumens' stories to the Paschal Mystery.

Schedule



The schedule for the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ has been formulated to offer an engaging balance of presentations, prayer, fellowship, discussion, and skills training. Twice a day, we will break into two smaller groups—**Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers** and **Regional and Diocesan Trainers**—for an in-depth focus on the needs and challenges of parish ministry and diocesan training and formation. Two optional receptions, on July 4 and July 5, will offer the opportunity for networking and fellowship with initiation ministers from around the country.

Opening Reception July 4, 2017

7:00pm – 9:00pm • Opening Reception and Fireworks on the Riverwalk

Join us for a special opening reception in the Sheraton Fountain-view Room, overlooking the Chicago River, with hors d'oeuvres and an open bar. After the reception, participants are invited to watch the Independence Day fireworks from the nearby Riverwalk. **Tickets are \$25.**

Day One July 5, 2017

8:00am – 8:50am • Breakfast and Registration

Check in, enjoy our continental breakfast, and introduce yourself to other participants.

9:00am – 9:45am • Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Prayer

The day begins with recorded greetings from Cardinal Blase Cupich, Liturgy Training Publications, and the ACTA Foundation, followed by introductions of the team members.

9:45am – 11:00am • Morning Session

Topic: How the Parish Community Encourages and Trains Its Members to be Evangelizers The ways the parish “encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers” in all of its activities (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 28) will be explored.

11:15am – 12:15pm • Continuing the Conversation

The two tracks will separate to break open the morning session.

12:15pm – 1:15pm • Lunch

Lunch is included in registration.

1:15pm – 1:45pm • Prayer

1:45pm – 2:00pm • Large Group Discussion

As a group, we gather our collective wisdom and “connect the dots” between the morning presentation, conversation, and prayer.

2:00pm – 3:00pm • Afternoon Session

Topic: The Baptismal Catechumenate and Its Role as a Model of Ongoing Formation The NGCI team will present the rationale for using the baptismal catechumenate (RCIA, 75) as a model for ongoing formation for Catholic communities.

3:00pm – 3:30pm • Coffee Break

3:30pm – 4:30pm • Skills Training

The two tracks will separate to break open the afternoon session. These breakout sessions will present practical skills to nourish discipleship in the parish and form others in the baptismal catechumenate.

4:40pm – 5:00pm • Evening Prayer

5:00pm – 7:30pm • Dinner on Your Own

7:30pm – 9:30pm • Evening Reception

Engage in fellowship over dessert and an open bar. **Tickets are \$25.**





Day Two July 6, 2017

8:00am – 8:50am • Breakfast

Enjoy coffee and a continental breakfast as you prepare for the day. Breakfast is included in registration.

9:00am – 9:20am • Prayer

9:20am – 10:45am • Morning Session

Topic: The Role of the Liturgy in Nourishing Discipleship

This session looks at the liturgy as central to the way the baptized reflect on the Paschal Mystery to accompany the unbaptized on a journey of joy, challenge, and conversion.

10:45am – 11:15am • Coffee Break

11:15am – 12:30pm • Continuing the Conversation

The two tracks will separate to break open the morning session.

12:30pm – 1:30pm • Lunch

Lunch is included in registration.

1:30pm – 2:00pm • Prayer

2:00pm – 3:00pm • Afternoon Session

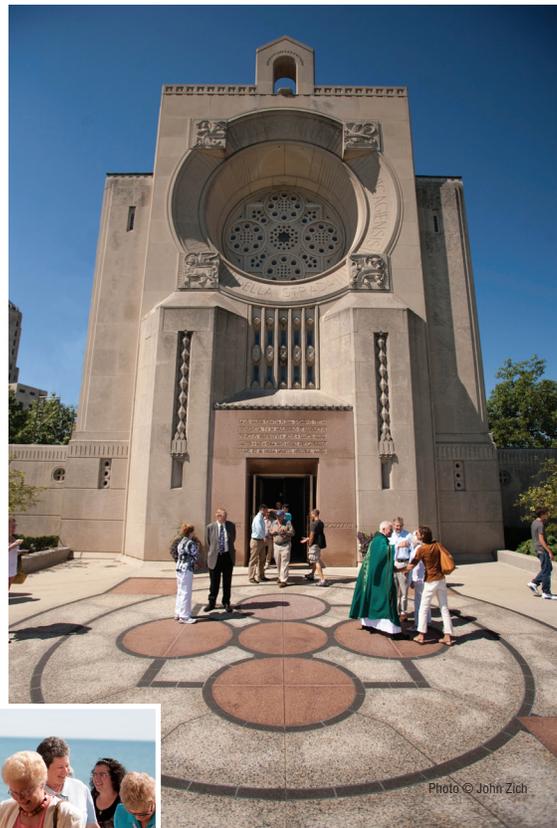
Topic: How Baptized Disciples Are Called to Live and Share Their Faith This session explores how baptized disciples live and share their faith by asking questions, listening, accompanying, and connecting their stories to the story of Christ Jesus.

3:10pm – 4:10pm • Skills Training

The two tracks will separate to break open the afternoon session. These breakout sessions will present practical ways to share one's faith in the parish community and implement a regular parish practice of spiritual preparation and mystagogical reflection.

4:15pm – 4:30pm • Closing and Prayer

Before departing, the NGCI team will send us forth with a few final thoughts.



The 2017 NGCI Team

Each year, a different team of presenters will work together with an LTP representative to plan the major presentations and breakout sessions of the event. Team members have been invited, not only because of their understanding of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the Church's mission of evangelization, but also because of their vast parish and diocesan experience. As a true collaboration, the individual gifts and ministerial experience of each team member will shape the NGCI experience.



Victoria M. Tufano is senior editor and liturgical consultant at Liturgy Training Publications. She is a coauthor of *Guide for Celebrating Christian Initiation with Adults* (LTP, 2016) and *Guide for Celebrating Christian Initiation with Children* (LTP, 2016).

She is a former team member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, and has served as a member and chair of the board of directors for that organization.

Why is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ important?

"Even though we have been implementing the RCIA for 30-plus years, we are still learning how to do it, what it means, how to adapt it for our times and places and people. For some it is still an entity attached to the parish rather than something at the core of parish life. We need to learn to see it as an integral part of being Church. We need to keep talking and listening to each other. We need to keep mining the wisdom of the Church as it is expressed in this document."

What does "Disciples Making Disciples" mean to you?

"To quote (or perhaps misquote) Balthasar Fischer, 'Shepherds don't make sheep; sheep make sheep.' To (mis)quote an African proverb, 'The village raises the child.' We preach Jesus Christ through our words, our actions, and our life in the world."



D. Todd Williamson is director of the Office for Divine Worship in the Archdiocese of Chicago. He speaks nationally on liturgy and the sacraments and is a coauthor of *Guide for Celebrating Christian Initiation with Adults* (LTP, 2016), *Guide for Celebrating Christian Initiation with Children* (LTP, 2016), and *Great Is the Mystery: Encountering the Formational Power of the Liturgy* (LTP, 2013).

What does "Disciples Making Disciples" mean to you?

"The Rite of Christian Initiation is rooted in the conviction and in the proved experience that one learns to be a disciple by living with disciples. In this case, it means one learns to be Catholic by doing what Catholics do; by being with Catholics, praying with Catholics, serving with Catholics, by being immersed into the life of the parish and the liturgical life of the Church. It is apprenticeship in its fullness. It is Pope Francis' understanding of accompaniment for every Catholic."

Why did you want to be a team member for the NGCI?

"Chicago was a pioneer in the implementation of the RCIA in the United States—one among three leading Archdioceses immediately after the Council. Liturgy Training Publications and the Office for Divine Worship, both of the Archdiocese of Chicago, together helped to ignite the fire that nationally swept the Church in this vision of evangelization, conversion and building up of the Body of Christ. I am excited to revisit our roots in this opportunity."

"... We need to keep mining the wisdom of the Church as it is expressed in this document."

—Victoria M. Tufano



Joseph Paprocki, DMIN, is the national consultant for faith formation at Loyola Press in Chicago. He has more than thirty-five years of experience in pastoral ministry and is the author of numerous books on pastoral ministry and catechesis, including *Great Is the Mystery:*

Encountering the Formational Power of Liturgy (LTP, 2013).

Paprocki serves as a catechist and writes about his experience in his blog, *Catechist's Journey*.

Why is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ important?

“The RCIA can and should be the heart and soul of a parish’s evangelization, faith formation, and worship efforts and practices. The gathering will help parishes to expand their understanding of the RCIA so that it can be truly life-giving for the parish.”

Why should parishes care about forming disciples in their communities?

“We can no longer just do things the way we’ve always done them. While our world has drastically changed all around us, much of what we do in the Church (as far as systems of ‘delivery’) relies on models from last century. We can no longer be sitting back and waiting for the doorbell to ring. We have to be proactive and intentional, and a huge part of that means that we need to do so much more than just ‘register’ people as parishioners. We need to articulate expectations and help them to live a life of discipleship.”



Rev. Michael E. Connors, CSC, is director of the John S. Marten Program in Homiletics and Liturgical Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He had been a member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate and is the author of *Inculturated Pastoral Planning: The U.S. Hispanic Experience* (Gregorian University Press, 2001).

Why are you excited about the NGCI?

“Even though it’s been a number of years now since I’ve been actively part of initiation ministry (except for presiding at Easter Vigils, sometimes with baptisms), I have seen how powerful it can be not only for initiands, but for team members, sponsors and the parish community at large. It remains for me the most exciting development of the post-Vatican II church. As a pastoral theologian, the parish remains a kind of theological home for me. Through my work with the NA Forum and elsewhere, I have continued to ponder this question: What is the parish community presumed by the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults?”



Michael Ruzicki is editor and liturgical training consultant for LTP and director of music for Notre Dame de Chicago Parish. Michael has served as a team member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, and as coordinator of adult and sacramental

formation for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. He is author of *Guide for Training Initiation Ministers: An Introduction to the RCIA* (LTP, 2017).

Why is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ important?

“The flame! We need to keep the flame burning brightly. The Holy Spirit is at work in the Church and we are there to cooperate in the much-needed work. By gathering together those who are passionate about initiation ministry, the Spirit will excite and energize us to pass our faith to those we encounter, whether baptized or unbaptized. The National Gathering will serve to form us in the vision of the baptismal catechumenate—through liturgy, catechesis, apostolic witness, and fellowship in community. I believe that the NGCI will serve as an ‘Upper Room’ moment for Christian initiation ministers—a chance to huddle together for a while, to be shaken by the Spirit, only to be sent out (on fire) to the corners of every land, proclaiming, preaching, and baptizing.”

How have you seen the power of the baptismal catechumenate played out in a parish community?

“Early in my ministry, I was blessed with the opportunity of serving as a pastoral associate of a small suburban parish. It was a special place that cared for outsiders as much as they cared for their own. We celebrated liturgy with joy and reverence. Catechesis inspired the heart as much as it did the mind. The feeling of hospitality and welcoming was warmer than anything else I’ve experienced—and they really knew how to party! What I did not realize right away—we were a community living in the vision of the baptismal catechumenate. We were a community that was nourished by Word and Eucharist so that we may be a radiant light in the world. By sharing our stories and experiences, my prayer is that we will all share our understanding of the baptismal catechumenate so that we may cultivate vibrant communities of faith and joy.”



Photo © John Zick

Travel & Accommodations

Location

The 2017 National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ will take place at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, located one block west of Lake Michigan, overlooking the Chicago River in the heart of the city. Easily accessible by bus, train, or car, the Sheraton offers Chicago visitors a prime location within walking distance of Chicago attractions such as Navy Pier, Michigan Avenue, Grant Park, Buckingham Fountain, the Art Institute, architectural river tours, shopping, dining, and entertainment.

Hotel Information

A limited number of hotel rooms are available at the Sheraton Grand Chicago for a special discounted rate of **\$149.00** per night. This rate is available for those who book before June 6, 2017, for the evenings of July 3, 2017–July 6, 2017. A limited number of rooms may be offered at this rate for additional nights, based on hotel availability.



Sheraton Grand Chicago

301 East North Water Street
Chicago, IL 60611
www.sheratonchicago.com

Phone: (312) 464-1000

Check in: 3:00 PM

Check out: 12:00 PM

To reserve a room at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, please call 312-464-1000 and mention NGCI, or visit <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NGCI>.

Directions

To/From O'Hare International Airport

GO Airport Express Shuttle*

Single one-way	\$30.00
Single round trip	\$56.00
Pair one-way	\$21.00 per person
Pair round trip	\$39.00 per person

The shuttle service from O'Hare International Airport for the downtown hotels departs every 10 to 15 minutes. Sheraton guests save 15% on shuttle service. Call 1-888-284-3826 and mention code word: Sheraton.

Taxi service	\$35-\$40
UberX	\$32-\$41
Lyft	\$26-\$32

Blue Line Train:

24-hour service; cost is \$2.25 one-way per person; travel time to downtown is 40 minutes; exit train at **Lake/Clark**. The hotel is approximately a 20 minute walk or \$5.00 taxi ride from the train station. For more information visit: <http://www.transitchicago.com>.

To/From Midway Airport

GO Airport Express Shuttle*

Single one-way	\$25.00
Single round trip	\$46.00
Pair one-way	\$17.00 per person
Pair round trip	\$31.00 per person

The shuttle service from Midway Airport for the downtown hotels departs every 20 minutes. Sheraton guests save 15% on shuttle service. Call 1-888-284-3826 and mention code word: Sheraton.

Taxi Service	\$25-\$40
UberX	\$23-\$29
Lyft	\$20-\$26

Orange Line Train:

Hours are 5:15am to 11:30pm; cost is \$2.25 one-way per person; travel time to downtown is 25 minutes; exit train at **Lake/Clark**. The hotel is approximately a 20 minute walk or \$5.00 taxi ride from the train station. For more information visit: <http://www.transitchicago.com/>.

*All prices are approximate and subject to change without notice.

Bus and railway options are also available. The Greyhound bus station, Megabus stop, Grand/State CTA station, Union Station, Clark/Lake CTA station, and Ogilvie Transportation Center are all located within two miles of the hotel and are easily reachable by taxi. Discounted parking is available at the Sheraton. Cheaper parking options may be found at nearby garages. For more details and for driving directions, visit www.NationalGatheringOnChristianInitiation.org/home/travel.



Extending Your Trip

Welcome to the Windy City

Festivals, concerts, art, comedy, and baseball—the summer sun glistening off Lake Michigan and tourists gathering in Millennium Park. There is no better time to visit Chicago than the summer. Scheduled to follow the Fourth of July weekend, and featuring discounted rooms at the Sheraton Grand Chicago, the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ offers the perfect opportunity to extend your trip to the Windy City and enjoy all that Chicago has to offer.

Attractions

- Millennium Park
- 360 Chicago at the John Hancock Building
- Navy Pier
- Lincoln Park Zoo
- Willis Tower Skydeck
- Architecture Tours

Museums

- Art Institute of Chicago
- Adler Planetarium
- The Field Museum
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Museum of Science and Industry
- Shedd Aquarium

Comedy

- The Second City
- iO Theater

Festivals (6/28–7/10)

- Chicago SummerDance
- Taste of Chicago
- Maxwell Street Market
- Millennium Park Summer Film Series

Sports

- Chicago White Sox
- Chicago Cubs
- Chicago Sky
- Millennium Park Summer Workouts

Concerts (6/28–7/10)

- Red Hot Chili Peppers
- Train
- Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
- Millennium Park Summer Music Series

Theater (6/28–7/10)

- Blue Man Group
- Hamilton
- Disney's Aladdin
- The King and I
- Bible Bingo
- Late Night Catechism

Catholic Churches

- St. Mary of the Angels
- St. Hedwig
- Holy Name Cathedral
- St. Hyacinth Basilica
- St. Stanislaus Kostka Church
- St. Clement

...And many more!



Join us in the Windy City!



800-933-1800

NATIONALGATHERINGONCHRISTIANINITIATION.ORG



Register by May 12, 2017, to guarantee your spot!

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Parish

Phone Circle: Home / Cell / Work

E-mail Address

Indicate Dietary Restrictions or Circle: None

\$250 Individual Registration, by May 12, 2017. *Includes breakfast and lunch for July 5th & 6th.*

\$25 July 4th Opening Reception and Fireworks on the Riverwalk. *Optional. Includes hors d'oeuvres and open bar.*

\$25 July 5th Evening Reception. *Optional. Includes dessert and open bar.*

To reserve a room at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, call 312-464-1000 and mention NGCI, or visit <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NGCI>.

I am registering for the:

Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers Track

Regional or Diocesan Trainers Track

To register, please complete and return this form with a check payable to:

Liturgy Training Publications

Attn: NGCI

3949 South Racine Ave

Chicago, IL 60609

To register online, visit: www.NationalGatheringOnChristianInitiation.org
Contact us at ngci@ltp.org or 773-579-4900, ext. 3554 with any questions.