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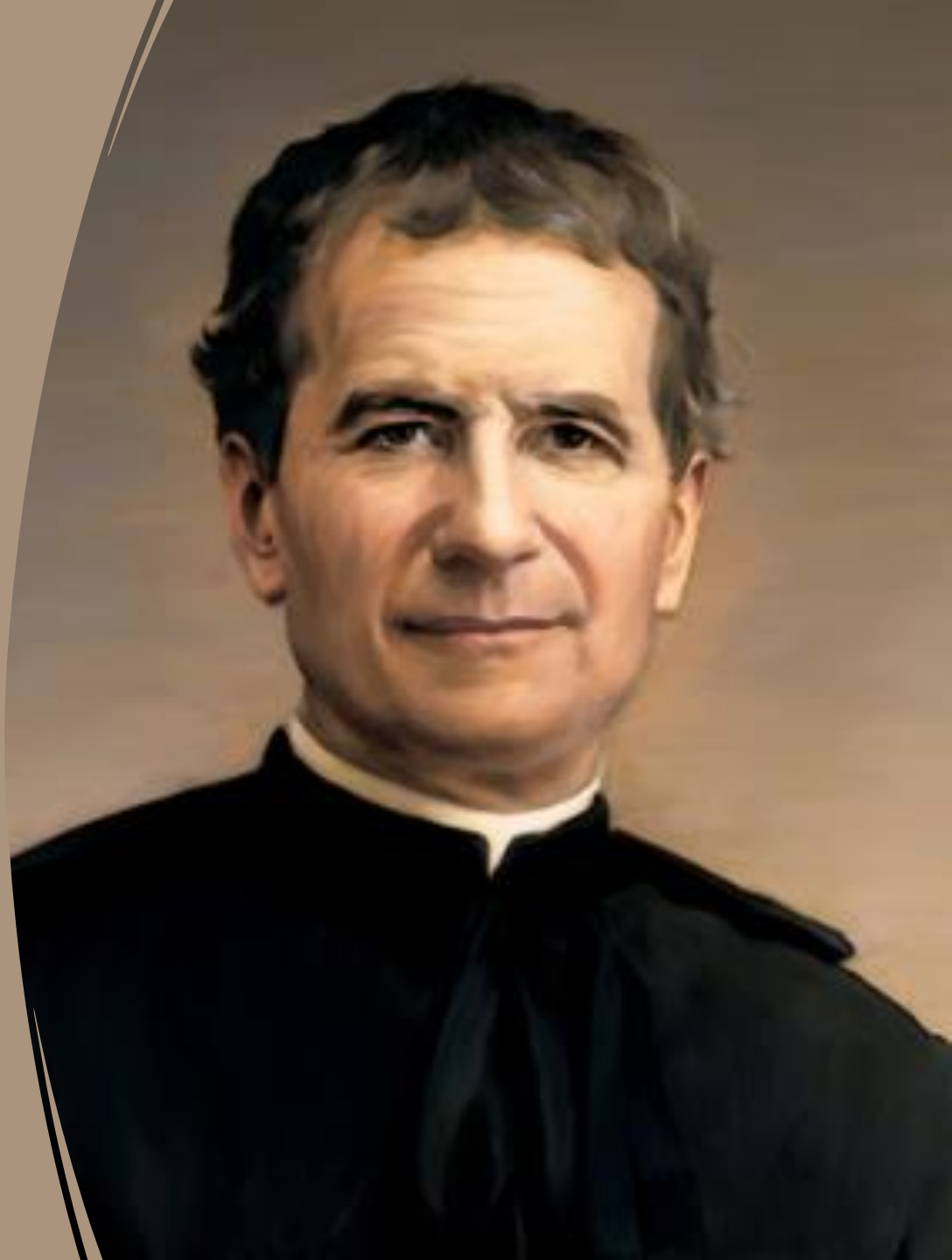
*Catechetical Skills and Best
Practices for Parish Leaders*

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Memorial of St. John Bosco

Saint John Bosco (1815–1888), popularly known as Don Bosco, was an Italian Catholic priest who dedicated his life to the education and welfare of impoverished and at-risk youth. His life's work was inspired by a transformative childhood dream and defined by his revolutionary "Preventive System" of education based on love rather than punishment.



Today's Gospel – Mark (4:35-41)

On that day, as evening drew on, Jesus said to his disciples:

“Let us cross to the other side.”

Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them in the boat just as he was.

And other boats were with him.

A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up.

Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.

They woke him and said to him,

“Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!”

The wind ceased and there was great calm.

Then he asked them, “Why are you terrified?

Do you not yet have faith?”

They were filled with great awe and said to one another,

“Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”

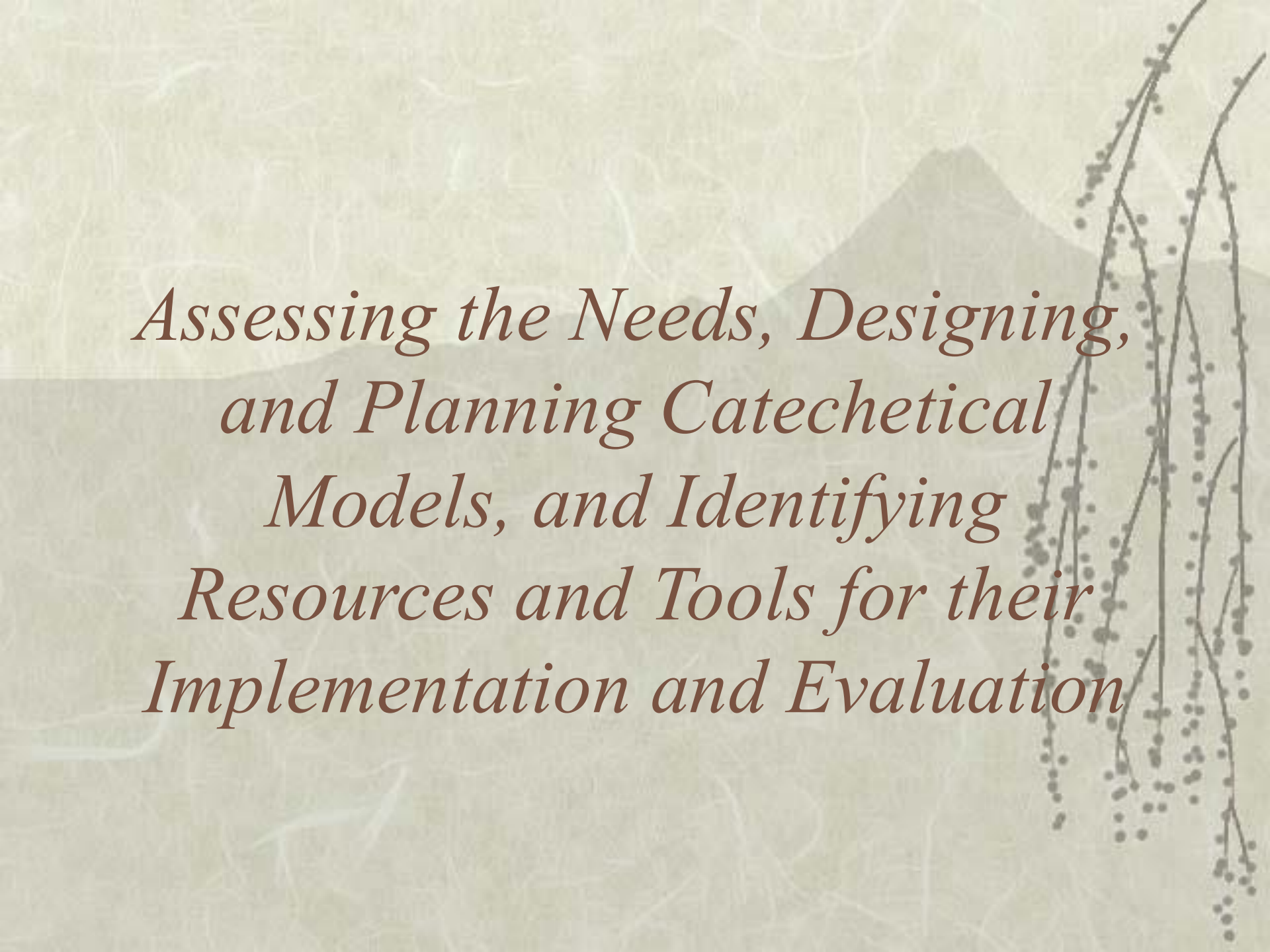


Let us pray...



St. John Bosco,
Your dedication to empowering the needy,
and enlightening the ignorant inspires us still.
Help us to work for a better world,
where the young are given the chance to flourish,
where the poor's dream for justice can come true,
and where God's compassion is shown to be real.
Intercede for us as we bring our needs to you and
to Our heavenly Mother, the Help of Christians.
Amen.

O God, who raised up the Priest Saint John
Bosco as a father and teacher of the young, grant
we pray, that, aflame with the same fire of love,
we may seek out souls and serve you alone. We
ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

The background features a soft, textured light beige surface. In the upper right, a dark silhouette of a mountain peak is visible. On the right side, a thin, dark branch with small, dark berries hangs down. The text is centered and written in a dark brown, elegant serif font.

*Assessing the Needs, Designing,
and Planning Catechetical
Models, and Identifying
Resources and Tools for their
Implementation and Evaluation*

LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR CATECHETICAL LEADERS

FINAL PROJECT

Based on the process we will introduce, outline the complete action plan you would develop for a faith formation process in your parish, or evaluate and improve a current process you already have in place. Describe what you would develop at each step of the process. Explain what resources you would use.

Part A. Designing Faith Formation Programming

1. Identify the target audience and assess and analyze their needs (considering age of participants, culture, language, socio-economic strata, education, etc.)
2. Define the goals or outcomes based on the needs
3. Develop the content or theme
4. Choose the one or more formats to offer the program or activity.

1. Identify the Target Audience and Assess and Analyze Their Needs

- ❖ Identify the Target Audience.
 - Consider the different members of your parish (culture, age, language, socio-economic strata, education level, etc.) for whom are you designing?
- ❖ What are their needs, interests, concerns, life issues, etc.?
 - Examples to gather information: Interviews, Focus groups, Surveys –See examples of Family Research on **Handout 1** and **Handout 2**
- ❖ Create a profile of how needs are presently being addressed and conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses/Challenges, Opportunities, Threats)
 - See examples of this on **Handout 3**

2. Define the Goals or Outcomes Based on the Needs

Faith formation needs to be developmentally appropriate and responsive to the diverse religiosities of believers. In planning consider:

1. Consider Active Believers,
2. Believers,
3. and Inactive Believers.

2. Define the Goals or Outcomes Based on the Needs

- ❖ Grounded in solid research on what promotes growth in faith and healthy individual and family development, the church needs to:
 - To **Encourage** parents to grow in the Catholic faith as adults.
 - To **Equip** parents to build families that live Christian practices at home and in the world.
 - To **Engage** parents in learning how to become faith formers of their children and teens.
 - To **Involve** the whole family in faith forming experiences and programs in the parish community.
 - To **Connect** families with the other generations in the parish community through intergenerational faith forming experiences.

2. Define the Goals or Outcomes Based on the Needs

- ❖ Consider programs, activities, resources, and relationships within the **Six Elements** of a Parent and Family Formation Plan Identified by NCCL:
 1. Forming the faith of the family at home
 2. Forming the faith of the family in the parish
 3. Equipping parents with practices and skills appropriate to each life stage
 4. Equipping parents to be faith formers of their children and adolescents
 5. Providing family catechesis for the entire family
 6. Fostering intergenerational relationship

See **Handout 4**.

3. Develop the Content or Theme

❖ Consider Four Approaches for Developing a Family Faith Formation Plan and Choose One or a Combination of them

1. Developing Life-Stage Appropriate Ideas/Programs/Activities
2. Developing Ideas/Programs/Activities that Apply to All Four Life Stages
3. Developing Sacramental Preparation for Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation using a Catechumenal Formation Model: Preparation-Celebration- Mystagogy
4. Developing a Family Catechesis Model of Learning for the Entire Family

Use **Handout 5** (Mapping out a Family Faith Formation Plan) by selecting ideas from **Handout 6** (Four Approaches for Developing a Family Faith Formation Plan & Two Examples).

4. Choose the One or More Formats

There is a variety of format possibilities (See **Handout 7** for format descriptions) :

- a) On your own
- b) Mentoring
- c) Small group learning
- d) Large group learning
- e) Community-based learning
- f) Hybrid (online and in-person)
- g) Online
- h) One program, multiple formats

Part B. Implementation of Faith Formation Programming

5. Schedule the programs and activities
6. Finding and Forming Leaders
7. Identify the Resources and Create the Budget and the Promotion plan
8. Evaluate the Program/Activity/Strategy/Resource

5. Schedule the Programs and Activities

To implement a program:

- 1) Determine the meeting space
- 2) Develop a step-by-step implementation plan and timeline of all the major tasks
- 3) Determine check-in times for monitoring family involvement
- 4) Determine the days of the week for programs
- 5) Develop a calendar for the year with program dates, times, and locations.

6. Finding and Forming Leaders

Who do you need? How will you invite? How will you prepare them?

Using **Handout 8**:

- reflect on the five principles for calling and supporting leaders
- Consider the suggested 8-step process to apply the five principles to decide on actions to take to call and form your leaders.

7. Identify the Resources, Create the Budget, and Promote the Plan

The role of the faith formation leader has shifted from creating religious content and activities to curating religious content and experiences. Use the suggestions and processes of **Handout 9** to:

- implement a 4-step Curation process to identify resources
- create a budget for implementing and promoting an annual curriculum plan

8. Evaluate the Plan

To evaluate a season or a year of programming you will want something structured.

Consider the Evaluation Tools included in **Handout 10.**

Pilot and Test

The purpose of piloting the program designed is to see how people interact with its activities in their real lives and to get feedback to refine the project and make it better.

- ❖ Consider testing the activity/program/resource with a small group of your target audience or,
- ❖ Test a micro-version of the larger project within a short timeframe (i.e., a season out of a whole year) for everyone in your target audience
- ❖ Obtain feedback. Review and analyze your findings to improve your project.