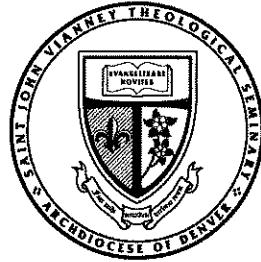




DENVER CATHOLIC
**BIBLICAL
SCHOOL**

ST. JOHN VIANNEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LAY DIVISION



DENVER CATHOLIC
**CATECHETICAL
SCHOOL**

ST. JOHN VIANNEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LAY DIVISION

Dear Prospective Student,

Welcome to the Denver Catholic Catechetical School! For more than 25 years, the Lord has blessed us with brothers and sisters who have a desire to learn more about the Catholic faith and encounter Jesus Christ in a deeper way through the teachings of his One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

We are excited that the Holy Spirit has guided you here! The purpose of this information session is to help you understand the scope of this exciting program and the requirements that we have for our students. Our program is expressly designed for the average, busy Catholic to guide you through the study of the Catechism, to help you apply the lessons to your daily life, and to strengthen your relationship with God. On our part, we aim to accomplish this through dynamic and effective teaching, small groups discussions, and prayer. In turn, we ask you simply to dedicate yourself to the following:

- Faithful attendance at class throughout the academic year (absences are permitted)
- Thoughtful completion of the weekly reading and homework assignments (do your best)
- Active participation in the weekly small group discussion

Enclosed you will find additional information, including our Policies & Procedures and a list of the First Year class locations for the new academic year. In order to accurately anticipate class enrollment, we ask that you please register online at www.sjvdenver.edu/laydivision as soon as possible. Tuition for the entire year is \$620 including a \$20 registration fee (\$560 for ages 65 and older). Other discounts, scholarships, and financial aid are available. Students can pay in full at the beginning of the year, once each semester, or monthly. Visit our website or talk to your instructor for more information!

We are excited and encouraged that you are interested in participating in the study of our Catholic faith with the Catechetical School and we pray that it will be as exciting and as life-giving for you as it is for us! Please visit our website to view short video testimonials from students!

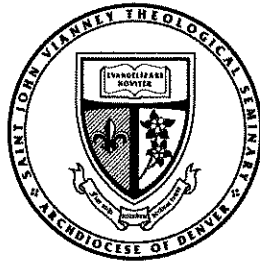
In the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Nicholas Lebish, D.Min., Ed.D
Director, Denver Catholic Biblical and Catechetical Schools



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St. John Vianney Seminary Lay Division
Denver Catholic Catechetical School

The Ladder of Ascent:
A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Registration:

To register, please visit: sjvlaydivision.org/register/

Annual Tuition (all fees below include \$20 registration fee)

	Discount	Tuition
General Student		\$620.00
Senior (65+)	10%	\$560.00
Veteran / Active Military / First Responder *	10%	\$560.00
Parish Volunteer Catechist *	10%	\$560.00
Full-time employee of Catholic ministry/Diocesan department *	100%	\$20.00
Part-time employee of Catholic ministry/Diocesan department *	50%	\$320.00

**Proof of military/employment/volunteer catechist status must be submitted to CBS office by 10/15/2020 to qualify. Failure to submit proof may disqualify discounted tuition rate.*

Tuition notes...

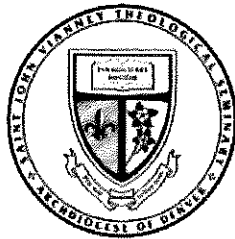
- Payable in one payment (Sept 2020), two payments (Sept 2020 & Jan 2021), or monthly payments (Sept 2020 through May 2021)
- First payment due no later than Sept 15, 2020.
- Tuition balance must be paid IN FULL by May 15, 2021.
- Limited Tuition Assistance available. Contact office for info.

Classes Begin: Week of September 14, 2020



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Ladders Student Testimonials

"Two years ago, I had so many questions about the Church. I read all the books, went to all the bible studies and still had questions. A friend of mine from church suggested I try the Ladder of Ascent to understand the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Catechism? I had never read the Catechism - it is big and bulky and intimidating. Exactly why I should take the class, she said. Well, it has been the best two years of my faith journey. Not only do I understand the Catechism more fully, but I know where to go for the answers when people ask me what the church believes. I know where to go for reference when I have more questions. I can actually stand up for the Church in a way that I was never able to do before because I just wasn't sure what I would say was actually what the Church taught. The second-year curriculum follows the Catechism through virtues, morals and prayer in a way that has deepened my relationship with Jesus and those around me. The instructors are incredibly knowledgeable, answer questions that I was always afraid to ask because I thought I should know, and they share a passion for their faith that is contagious. Let me pass on the suggestion to you that my friend had for me. In Jesus's words, "Don't be afraid," go to the class and enrich your faith!" ~Tracy S.

I thought Brian Wallisch had the smoothest delivery of any teacher I ever had in college or graduate school. The doctrines of the Church can be very extensive and profound, but Brian would spontaneously introduce amusing anecdotes about his challenges raising a bunch of boys, who because of their youth failed to grasp the significance of many charitable principles of behavior. He would have us all laughing at his predicament, lightening the mood. He was always responsive to questions and quick to offer clarifications when requested. ~Terry R.

I took the 2 - year Ladders class first, instead of the 4 - year Biblical class because it was less commitment. The semesters flew by and gave me so much more understanding into the 4 Pillars of our Church (Creed, Sacraments, Moral Life, and Prayer). I was embarrassed when a Christian friend had asked me about the class before I attended and I couldn't even tell her the correct 4 pillars - I thought (one, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic!). Baptized as an Infant and raised in the faith I am amazed at how much more I learn now, as an adult, with every new class I take. The 2-year Ladders classes convinced me that I need to take the 4 - year Biblical school and I have now completed my first year of that already. Trust me, it goes by fast and is so worth it!! God Bless! ~Deborah K.

I don't usually give testimonials, but my appreciation of the Catechism Ladder program has me replying to you. The...program not only teaches us what we believe as Catholics, but it nourishes and nurtures our relationship with God - the Source of Blessings. I am a religious sister who only made my temporary vows last year and I learnt so much. It was not only what was in the book but also what was shared by all the participants as Catholics thirsting to get to know God a little better and more intimately. It helped that our lecturer was passionate about his faith and gave great analogies, relatable examples, even personal life stories that made what we were learning more personal - inviting us to explore our relationship with God - to go deeper. I loved the class environment that allowed us to freely listen, ask questions and share on your faith. And lastly, the little small group tables give us friends on the journey. ~Sr. Monica

Catechetical School was nothing short of amazing. I went in thinking it would be a two-year lesson on the "rule book" of the Catholic Church, but I was blown away with this course. I began studying the Creed and digging in deep to the true meaning of what it means to be Catholic. I learned the scriptural roots of all of the Sacraments. The second year started with an in depth look at moral life, then culminated with the most beautiful prize, a semester long lesson on prayer. The instructors were incredible and the way they put together this course was well thought out, organized and such an incredible blessing. Every Catholic needs to take this class to better understand the teachings and philosophy of our beautiful faith! ~Michele S.

I graduated from the Denver Catholic Biblical School in 2011 right as I was entering Formation for the Diaconate. During Formation we did a lot of study of the Catechism and I also made a point of reading it through in a year. I wanted to deepen my understanding of the Catechism, so I enrolled in the Catechism class. The method in which it was presented, the study questioned asked, and the small group discussions helped to clarify the meaning and although me to become much more familiar with the teachings of the Church. I thoroughly enjoyed the Biblical and Catechetical Schools and would recommend them to anyone who would like to deepen their knowledge of the faith and grow in their relationship with God. ~Deacon Dennis W.

Lesson 1: “The Journey of Ascent Begins”

Prologue and Profession (CCC 1–73)

Introduction:

Congratulations, you are about to undertake the journey of a lifetime. This first lesson of the Ladder of Ascent describes that journey of faith you are about to begin. You will find that the *Catechism* aims less at supplying faith facts than at laying out a map for just such a journey. As the very first paragraph of the *Catechism*'s prologue suggests, that journey of ascent is one from Blessing to Blessing. We are made by God and we are made to return to God. And so this journey is not one that is imposed on us from without by some religious authority but one that is written into our very genetic code, so to speak. As the *Catechism* puts it, “The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God” (CCC 27).

This journey has as its destination our heart's deepest longing. It is not a forced march; in fact, it's much more like a wedding march. God doesn't command that we undertake it, he invites us to seek the happiness that we were made for, a graced happiness that the Church calls beatitude. That is nothing less than a share in the blessed life of God himself.

You'll see that the journey of ascent to your greatest happiness is a journey of faith. And by faith the *Catechism* doesn't just mean merely a profession of faith. In paragraphs 14–17 the life of faith is described as just that, a life. That life is made up of acts that engage us at the deepest levels of our being and correspond to our intellectual desire for truth, the desire of our wills for the good, as well as that deepest of our desires, the need to worship. Those desires are met in the life of faith in four ways that correspond to the four parts of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. They are: the profession of faith, represented by the Creed; the sacraments of faith; the moral life and prayer. As you will see, these four parts of the *Catechism* are far more than mere subject divisions, they are rungs on a ladder of ascent back to the Blessing from which we come and toward which we ascend on our journey through the *Catechism*. They are nothing less than God's particular plan to draw us up to ultimate happiness.

Start out with prayer...

Part of your reading assignment for this lesson is Wisdom 13:1–9. Consider making a few of the verses in that passage the subject of a short prayer each day this week.



Jean-Francois Millet, *The Angelus*, 1857–59

Lesson 1 Outline:

Key Themes:

- I. Catechesis is organic and systematic
- II. The four pillars of the *Catechism* are our ladder of ascent to the Father
- III. The *Catechism* gives us the roadmap for our journey from Blessing to Blessing

Lesson Outline:

- I. What is the *Catechism*?
 - A. Handing on the Faith: Catechesis (CCC 4–10)
 1. To make disciples and bring people into the fullness of Christian life
 2. Organic and systematic
 3. The organization of the *Catechism* reveals the character of its catechesis
 - B. Four divisions or pillars of the *Catechism*
 1. The Profession of Faith – a summary of the story of salvation
 2. The Sacraments of Faith – how God’s salvation is made present to us
 3. The Life of Faith (the Moral Life) – how we reach our goal of happiness
 4. Prayer in the Life of Faith – how we live our relationship with God, which is prayer
 - C. The Church is organic, not mechanic
 1. The faith is confessed, celebrated, lived, and prayed
 2. Catechesis discloses content of the faith and the Church as the living Body of Christ

II. From Blessing to Blessing

- A. “God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life...” (CCC 1)
- B. The life of faith that the *Catechism* describes is life’s journey from God and back to him
- C. The way the Father reaches out to bless us on the way is his “plan of sheer goodness”
- D. The life of faith in the Church is like the rungs of a ladder for us to ascend to God
 - 1. The profession of faith – twelve articles of the Apostle’s Creed
 - 2. The sacraments of faith – seven sacraments
 - 3. Life of faith – the Ten Commandments
 - 4. Life of Prayer – the seven petitions of the Our Father

III. Why we go on this journey

- A. Desire for God is written on our hearts, and only he can truly satisfy us (CCC 27–30)
- B. Happiness is the purpose of our journey from Blessing to Blessing
 - 1. Natural happiness according to Aristotle
 - a. The fullest development of the highest human powers over a lifetime
 - b. St. Augustine – “trinity” of spiritual powers – memory, intellect and will
 - 2. Blessedness – happiness perfected by grace through the theological virtues
 - a. Intellect – images Son – perfected in faith – Creed
 - b. Memory – images Father – perfected in hope – Sacraments
 - c. Will – images Spirit – perfected in charity – Moral Life and Life of Prayer
 - 3. Our *telos* (purpose) is ultimate happiness is divine life in God

4. The structure of the *Catechism* shows us that an integrated Catholic life will yield salvation, perfection, and happiness by addressing every human need

IV. The Path to Blessing

- A. We know God through both reason and faith (CCC 31–49)
- B. Revelation – the true story of God’s coming to meet us
 1. Divine pedagogy – revelation is gradual, through deeds and words (CCC 53)
- C. The economy of salvation – the working out of God’s plan of sheer goodness in history
 1. From the Greek *oikonomia*, “law of the household”; also called salvation history
 2. Stages of revelation – the structure of salvation history (CCC 54–67)
 3. Jesus is the Father’s “one, perfect, and unsurpassable Word” (CCC 65)
 4. There will be no new public revelation
- D. In his Church, Christ has erected a ladder of ascent for us to journey back to the Father
- E. The *Catechism* describes this journey for us as our participation in the Father’s economy of salvation

Key Words:

oikonomia – economy (of salvation), the works by which God reveals himself

telos – purpose, ultimate end

Reading Assignment:

Carefully read all of the following selections:

From the Catechism

Pages 1–6: The Apostolic Constitution *Fidei Depositum*

Paragraphs 1–73: Prologue, Man’s Capacity for God, and The Revelation of God

From Scripture

Wisdom 3:1–9

Discussion Questions:

1. According to the *Catechism*, what are some of the ways we can come to know God exists?
2. What have been the challenges to your faith in the existence of God?
3. What is the Magisterium and what is its relationship to Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition?
4. How can we speak about God (CCC 39–49)? What are some of the adjectives you regularly use?
5. Explain your personal experience with catechesis or being taught the Christian faith as a child and/or adult.
6. What are your personal motivations, hopes, or goals for this class?

Additional “Thought-teasers”

The following “thought-teasers” are provided as an optional basis for further class discussion.

1. Why do you think the Church engages in the act of teaching the faith (catechesis)?
2. What are some of the contenders for human happiness (i.e., what do we think will make us happy)?
3. Is faith a real form of knowledge or is it opinion?

Denver Catholic Biblical and Catechetical Schools 2020-2021

1300 S. Steele St, Denver CO 80210 -- Office 303.715.3195 -- Fax 303.715.2007 -- sivlaydivision.org

JULY 2020						
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NOTE:
Due to COVID-19 concerns, all Lay Division classes will be offered online temporarily for the 2020-2021 year. Check school website for latest information.

2020	
Aug 15	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sep 7	Labor Day
Sep 14	All classes begin
Oct 25 - 31	Fall Break
Nov 1	All Saints' Day
Nov 7	Fall Workshop @ St Thomas More (Centennial)
Nov 22 - 28	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 8	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Dec 20 - Jan 2	Christmas Break
Jan 1	Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God

2021	
Jan 4	All classes resume
Jan 18 - 23	Week 15 - End of First Semester
Jan 18	MLK Day
Jan 30	Servant of the Word Workshop - Status: TBD
Feb 14 - 20	Winter Break
Feb 27	Lenten Retreat
Mar 28-Apr 10	Holy Week and Easter Break
Apr 4	Easter Sunday
May 24	Final week for weekly classes
May 13	Ascension of the Lord
May 31	Memorial Day
TBD	Nebo Evening (CBS 4 students only)
TBD	Graduation Mass (CBS 4 & LAD 2)

Your notes:

While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this calendar, please be aware that dates may change. Any calendar change(s) will be communicated to students and posted on our website as they are announced.

JANUARY 2021						
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JUNE 2021						
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