



# National Gathering on Christian Initiation™

A Conference for Catechumenal Ministers  
and Pastoral Leaders

## Presenters Possess Range of Experience

### Mary G. Fox

Catechesis, Fr. David Loftus understands, starts long before an individual meets a catechist. The teaching of the faith begins, he says, with God's initiative.

The former adult formation consultant in the Office of Religious Education for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles said that catechists should acknowledge God's action in relaying the faith. "God has been working and forming people long before they ever find themselves in the company of the Church's catechist," he said, adding, "Their pilgrimage, which brings them into the presence of the catechist, is already richly graced with life experiences and formative encounters that are part and parcel of their ongoing formation in the faith. Respect for this work of the Divine is an essential and integral aspect of the next stages of the journey for potential catechumens and candidates. It may require a renewed appreciation for the humility of the catechist and the initiation team of which they are a part."



Loftus will be among the team of presenters at the second annual National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ (NGCI) on July 5 and 6 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Chicago. The theme of the Gathering is "To Emmaus and Back: Liturgy and Catechesis."

Noting his "passion for formation," the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Northridge, California, said that he is concerned about approaches to catechesis that are inadequate for "preparing and supporting people for a life of discipleship of Jesus Christ."

He considers the work of a catechist in initiation ministry to be "a sacred and responsible duty." Entering the pilgrimage of those seeking initiation, he said, requires skills and tools. "A well-disposed heart, a love of the faith, and a commitment to service are a good beginning. Well-formed catechists are a necessity, and a well-honed pastoral sense is increasingly important."



Donna M.  
Eschenauer

Other members of the NGCI team:  
**Donna M. Eschenauer, PhD**, served in pastoral roles for more than twenty-two years in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, as a religious educator, liturgist, and director of the catechumenate. Presently she is the associate dean and associate professor of pastoral theology at St. Joseph's Seminary and College in New York, where she teaches the course "RCIA: Theology and Practice." She is the author of *The Role of the Coordinator in Christian Initiation: A Pastoral and Practical Guide* (LTP, 2017)



Patricia J.  
Hughes

**Patricia J. Hughes, DMIN**, the director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Dallas, began her ministry in the Church as a parish organist. She has served as director of the Worship Office for the Diocese of Grand Rapids (Michigan), as director of worship for the Cathedral of the Assumption (Louisville, Kentucky), and as director of music ministry and liturgy in three states. She serves on the boards of the Southwest Liturgical Conference, Sacred Liturgy Ministries (Portland, OR), and Mayslake Ministries (Chicago). She is a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy and the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Hughes writes the "Worship Meeting Agenda" in *Pastoral Liturgy*®.



Michael Ruzicki

**Michael Ruzicki** is the training and events manager at Liturgy Training Publications and the director of music for Notre Dame de Chicago Parish. Before arriving at LTP five years ago, he served as a team member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, a parish pastoral associate for liturgy and, for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, as coordinator of adult and sacramental formation and director of the archdiocesan music ministry. He is the author of *Guide for Training Initiation Ministers: An Introduction to the RCIA* (LTP, 2018). ♦

*Liturgy Training Publications invites parish leaders, initiation ministers, and regional or diocesan trainers to come together to explore the theoretical and practical aspects of initiation ministry.*



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To Emmaus and Back:  
Liturgy and Catechesis  
2018

July 5-6 • Chicago, IL

The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ features two days of interactive sessions, meetings, and prayer opportunities, inviting participants to a deeper understanding of the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. The gathering will take place one block west of Lake Michigan at the Sheraton Grand Chicago hotel, overlooking the Chicago River in the heart of the city.

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 or Diocesan Trainers** will explore and discuss practical strategies for implementing effective training and formation in their local communities.

### Registration Costs

Individual Registration, by May 11, 2018 **\$250**  
*Includes Lunch on July 5th & 6th.*

July 4th Opening Reception and Fireworks on the Riverwalk **\$30**  
*Optional. Includes an open bar.*

To register online, visit:  
**www.NGCI.org**

To reserve a room at the Sheraton Grand Chicago Hotel, call 312-464-1000 and mention NGCI, or visit <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NGCI2018>.



- Opening reception with a view of July 4th fireworks from the Riverwalk.
- Exceptionally low room rate of **\$154.00** per night in Downtown Chicago.
- Fellowship with initiation ministers from around the country.
- Interactive multimedia presentations, complimentary resources, and expert training.
- Opportunities for prayerful reflection on the liturgies of the RCIA.



“In addition to offering education and formation, we hope the National Gathering will renew the energy of experienced ministers and 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 Tufano,  
LTP Senior Editor and Liturgical Consultant