



kino institute

Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix

Address to the Faculty of the Kino Institute

Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted

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1. The Kino Institute provides faith formation for adults of our Diocese. It lays a foundation for the lives of our laity through catechesis, built on the Church's teaching, i.e. the Deposit of Faith, both written (Sacred Scripture) and handed down (Tradition).

- This means that the two foundational texts of the Kino Institute are the Bible and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- This means that the focus of Kino is not theology but catechesis. Cardinal Christoph Schonborn explains this quite succinctly. See HANDOUT: *Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

2. The Kino Institute builds on and serves the faith formation of families and parishes. It does not replace them but complements and deepens what happens there. This means that it offers two primary programs, or two different levels of formation:

1. Catechist formation classes for teachers and parish catechists
2. Prepare the Way/Caminante for parish leaders and deacon candidates.

Catechist formation classes offer a good opportunity for any adult Catholic to have an introductory, yet systematic and basic formation in Catholic doctrine.

Prepare the Way/Caminante offers catechetical formation primarily for parish leaders whom the pastor has asked to coordinate and direct a parish program on his behalf. This program, because it is more suited to parish leaders and “deacon candidates” is deeper than the CAT/catechist formation in both its length of time and hours but also the depth of doctrinal content that is covered.

In addition, Kino accomplishes other things; it a) assists parents to be better teachers of their children; b) it helps married couples to deepen their faith, after it has been reinvigorated by marriage prep programs, NFP instruction, marriage enrichment programs, etc. c) it provides the next step in on-going formation for new converts, building on what they received in the RCIA in parishes. d) It provides the next step in formation for Cursillistas, who have had the “little course” in catechesis and now hunger for more. E) It provides the next step for those who have done adult catechesis in parishes, such as *Just Faith*, *Christ renews His Parish*, *Formation in the Sacred Liturgy*, etc.

3. While the faith formation we do in the Kino Institute is catechesis, and not theology per se, we keep in mind the broader picture of all the theological programs that flow from solid catechesis and build upon it. For example, there are undergraduate, college accredited courses in Theology; there are intensive seminars sponsored by groups such as the National Catholic Bioethics Center, which grant credentials. There are

diaconate formation programs, formation for marriage leaders, formation for those who visit the sick, etc.

Then, there are more formal theology programs that grant higher degrees, the STB, the MA in Theology, the M.Div., the STL, the STD, etc. All of these theology programs presuppose a solid grounding in the Church's teaching that is provided by catechesis built on the Catechism and the Sacred Scriptures.

The Kino Institute fosters interest in these theology programs, and we are delighted when our students want to pursue them.

4. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* represents the four pillars of our Catholic faith, each of which is a dynamic reality: the Profession of Faith, the Celebration of the Christian Mystery (the Sacred Liturgy and the Sacraments), Life in Christ (the Dignity and Vocation of each person, the Beatitudes, sin and grace, the Virtues, the Ten Commandments) and Christian Prayer. Consider, for example of the dynamic nature of the First Pillar, the Creed.

- Reciting the Creed at Mass is a significant liturgical event, done every Sunday in every parish in the world.
- Wise words of my Vocation Director on beginning theological studies: "After 4 years of study, when prepared for ordination as a priest, may every word of the Creed be full of meaning for you."

5. There is one temptation for us to avoid in catechesis, in the mission and programs of the Kino Institute: namely the temptation to neglect some teachings of the Church, to go around some points, to cut

corners on others—because they are not popular, or we are not comfortable with them. When faced with this temptation, we need to remember:

- Doctrine has saving power. It is salvific, not just interesting, not just opinion, but the actual revelation of God Himself.
- The Church’s teaching is organic, it forms a living unity. When I believe, I believe in God and I believe what God says and does. I don’t believe a multitude of separate things, assented to individually (although being a limited human being, I study them that way.); I believe all God reveals.
- The Church’s teaching is symphonic; it is interlinked in an unbreakable chain. All four parts of the Catechism are related to one another in harmonious fashion.
- The Church’s teaching is both propositional and personal. As the *Catechism* teaches (#170), “*We do not believe in formulas, but in those realities they express, which faith allows us to touch...All the same, we do approach these realities with the help of formulations of the faith which permit us to express the faith and to hand it on, to celebrate it in community, to assimilate and live on it more and more.*”
- A catechist is a teacher, not a facilitator. Our beliefs are true; they are real. Our opponent is the “father of lies.” The Proclamation of the Gospel is joined to a call for conversion of mind and heart. This implies that some thoughts, some opinions are not true. So the catechist’s role, while requiring respectful listening, is not that of a facilitator who calls forth and “affirms” everyone’s opinion. A facilitator promotes sharing of experiences, but a catechist teaches the truth that sets us free. Cardinal Schonborn writes: “*While it is clear that catechesis should refer to the lived experience of its hearers, its first responsibility*

or aim is to go beyond them towards what, by its very nature, does not form part of everyday experience. Faith takes us elsewhere. It opens up new unknown horizons, and in that way opens up space for experiences that everyday experience does not know. In theological terms: the faith is a response to an unheard-of revelation. Beginning from lived experience in the today of our young people we do not automatically arrive at revealed faith.”

–SOWER, July 2003, p. 8

The difference between doctrine and theology

“There is a vital need to understand the difference between doctrine and theology. Doctrine...is salvific; it leads us toward holiness. The Catechism contains doctrine, not theology—theology being the activity of reflecting upon doctrine. It is important to distinguish, then, between the doctrine of the Faith and its theological explanation. And it is doctrine that is the province of catechesis. Catechists proclaim the Church’s doctrine, her teaching; they do not teach theology. Theology is studied and taught by some; doctrine is to be known, received, understood, and handed on by all the members of Christ’s body, without exception.

“...the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is situated at a level that precedes theological concepts and that provides their foundation. The *Catechism* is not situated at the level of theologies, which are necessarily, plural, but at the level of the rule of Faith, which is necessarily one, since the Faith itself is one.

“The *Catechism* presupposes a clear distinction between the doctrine of the Faith and theological work. It is urgent to return to the distinction that St. Thomas makes so clearly in his famous Question I of the *Summa*. For St. Thomas it is clear that the articles of the Faith, summarized in the Credo, do not constitute theological conclusions but the actual principles upon which all theological reflection should be based. The articles of the Faith have the same role as axioms in the natural sciences. They are presuppositions for all theological reflection. The latter does not formulate them but has as its task to explain them, to explain their implications, their mutual links, their meaning for human action, and so on. Theology does not judge these principles but works in the light of them. The role of magisterial authority, then, is to define *doctrine*, in this way providing the sure foundations for catechetical work, for the ‘good news’, which is salvific and leads to the holiness of heaven.”

--Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, *The Catechism...and the Craft of Catechesis*, xxxi-f