

An Invitation: The new Directory for Catechesis* calls for a “close connection between Evangelization and Catechesis (which) therefore becomes the distinctive feature of this Directory”. * CTS July 2020.

The Academy of the Annunciation (AoA) - at the forefront of this synthesis of the New Evangelization and Catechesis - invites you to experience our unique inter-active programmes of 1 year certificate, 2 year diploma, and discovery study days or evenings, all at competitive costs.

AoA has taken a fresh approach in promoting and facilitating the New Evangelization

The Challenge: of increasing secularisation, together with a lack of adequate faith formation, has led to the current situation, and post-pandemic predictions expand the challenge. Dr Stephen Bullivant’s recent book* cites “2 out of every 5 cradle Catholics no longer identify as Catholic. A Catholic upbringing is a stronger predictor of having ‘no religion’ in adulthood than it is of being a once-a-month-or-more church-goer.” More than 1/3 of UK Catholics lapse or become disaffiliated. “Less than half of ‘Catholic retainees’ attend church at least monthly, and a significant number do so ‘never or practically never’.”

* British Social Attitudes Survey, interviews with Catholics 2007-2011.

The Solution: Forming intentional disciples and effective witnesses, equipping them to respond to the issues of the day, “bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church”. Bishop Philip Egan

AoA provides Catholics with robust formation in the philosophical, theological and spiritual content of the

Catholic Faith: Enlightening, equipping, and empowering them to give credible witness to the Church’s profession of faith, and enabling them to present Christ’s call to this generation with fresh conviction, vigour, and authenticity, (cf. St John Paul II, Ut Unum Sint 8, 32). In order for the Gospel to be heard and received in our society, those who speak of Christ need to understand, not only the Church’s teaching, but also the ideas, instincts, aspirations, and assumptions that permeate the culture in which we live. AoA programmes provide effective formation to render fruitful our efforts to reach the minds and souls of our contemporaries.

Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ. Romans 10:17.

Upon all the laity ... rests the noble duty of working to extend the divine plan of salvation to all men [and to] zealously participate in the saving work of the Church. Vatican II, Lumen Gentium 33.

The moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization ... No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church, can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.

St John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio 3.

Our own time must be increasingly marked by a new hearing of God’s Word and a new evangelization. Recovering the centrality of the divine Word in the Christian life leads us to appreciate anew the deepest meaning of the forceful appeal of Pope John Paul II: to pursue the missio ad gentes and vigorously to embark upon the new evangelization, especially in those nations where the Gospel has been forgotten or meets with indifference as a result of widespread secularism. May the Holy Spirit raise up zealous heralds and witnesses of the Gospel. Benedict XVI, Verbum Domini 122.

With Christ joy is constantly born anew. I encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy. Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 1.

A serious response: to this call requires training and education. AoA forms and informs individuals to understand and deepen their faith in ways which are personally enriching, and powerfully effective in catechetics and evangelization, so that busy Parish Priests, Religious Congregation Formators, and Diocesan departments can confidently direct their key personnel to AoA courses for transformative effect in their out-reach and mission.

How does AoA equip Catholics for the Church's Mission and Parish Renewal?

Our courses are designed to help participants make existing formation and parish programmes more effective.

AoA trains and educates catechists, formators, and parish volunteers to be more effective as they work with the programmes which are already in use. Our students become adept at presenting authentic Catholic teaching using a variety of resources.

- All Sessions are Live, completely interpersonal and interactive - just as in a real classroom setting. Students participate in live discussions, participating as much, or as little, as they wish.
- Opportunities for collaborative ministry and community building: collaborate with others, meet fellow disciples, share experiences, build friendships, and interact with our world-wide network of students.
- Dedicated Academic Tutor whom students can contact by email at any time.
- The Senior Academic Tutor and the Director of Spiritual Theology have Doctorates from Rome's Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), and many years of experience, teaching Clergy, Religious and Laity in Rome, Ireland, England, and the USA.
- AoA programmes provide foundational studies in Biblical and Catholic Theology, enabling students to **communicate theological truths using both traditional and contemporary examples and illustrations, equipping them to use new methods to communicate the Catholic faith with new ardour, being truly mission-ready for the parish, the diocese, the world, inviting souls to a more intentional discipleship.**
- AoA welcomes students who wish to study solely for personal enrichment.
- AoA offers Study Days in Philosophy, Theology, Apologetics, Spiritual Theology, and Biblical Studies.

Cardinal Newman Catechetical Certificate - Reasons for Faith (1 year):

- Explore the underlying reasons for faith - not just regurgitating quotations from the Catechism!
- Learn to think theologically. Understand the Scriptural foundations of Catholic Dogma and give reasons for faith that are rational and credible, since "faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of Truth". (St John Paul II).
- Hermeneutic of Continuity: Jesus says, "every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old," (Mt 13:52). AoA students learn to employ the teachings of the Fathers and St Thomas Aquinas, as well as contemporary sources.
- Parish Renewal: Students support one-another in more effective implementation of parish programmes.
- Recommended for catechists, teachers, parish workers, parents, young adults and everyone interested in the deeper reasons why the teaching of the Catholic Church is relevant in the 21st Century.

St John Diploma - Spiritual Formation (2 years):

- This programme is directed by Dr Denise Oliver, former Professor of Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) and Lecturer for the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation.
- Learn to understand the writings of the Saints, and ways of authentic Christian meditation and contemplation.
- Discover the connections between the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, contemplative prayer, and the various aspects of Spiritual Theology, so that you can recognize these in the lives of the Saints, and your own life.
- Identify the signs of growth in holiness in the Saints and be equipped to recognize those same signs in yourself, and in your students, and spiritual directees.
- Recommended for Religious formators, parish lay workers, teachers, parents, young adults and everyone interested in the path of prayer and the journey of the soul toward union with God.

Why I should sign-up for a course with the Academy of the Annunciation:

- Courses are completed entirely online but through live interactive teaching sessions. No long distance travel.
- Students support one-another in more effective implementation of parish programmes
- Theological teaching applied to practical situations with everyday life examples.
- Slide presentations and visual aids for easy note-taking.
- Optional retreat at the end of each year of study with the Oratorian Fathers at the Bournemouth Oratory.