**All God’s People**  
*Effective Catechesis in a Diverse Church*  
by Donna Toliver Grimes

This volume in *The Effective Catechetical Leader* series focuses on *those to be catechized*. Disciples of Christ come in all shapes, sizes, ages, and colors. They come from different backgrounds and with different needs, gifts, challenges, and opportunities. As a result, catechesis cannot take the form of one-size-fits-all. The effective catechetical leader recognizes the richness of the various unique peoples to be catechized and crafts catechetical approaches to effectively proclaim the Gospel to each group. This book examines the many varieties of peoples to be catechized along with strategies for effectively engaging them in life-giving faith formation.

**Annotated Table of Contents**

1. **Rights and Responsibilities in Catechesis**: Catechesis is not a luxury. According to Canon Law (217), each of the baptized faithful in the Church has a right to catechesis, an obligation to participate in catechesis (229) and the Church has a responsibility (“grave duty” - 773) to provide catechesis to all the faithful. This chapter explores the canonical rights and responsibilities connected with the Church’s catechetical mission in order to equip the catechetical leader with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively engage the widest possible population in catechetical formation.

2. **Good Bye “Catholic Bubble”— Diversity, Mobility and Various –isms in Today’s Culture**: In a bygone era, many Catholics lived in insular Catholic communities where individuals who were formed in the Catholic faith by the family and the community needed only to receive “instruction” on the catechism to complete their formation. Today, this “bubble” no longer exists. This chapter explores how diversity, mobility, pluralism, multiculturalism, secularism, relativism, and materialism (as well as globalization and technology) have radically changed the way people live and are formed and how the Church must respond.

3. **The Word Became Flesh – Catechesis and Enculturation**: Since the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the Church has found ways to proclaim the Word of God to all nations in their own “tongue” which means much more than a spoken language. This chapter explores the reality and practical application of enculturation and how the effective catechetical leader discerns ways to speak (and bring God’s justice and mercy) to the variety of cultures in the parish community.
4. It All Begins at Home – Catechesis, the Family, and the Domestic Church: Parents have a responsibility to raise their children in the faith. The Church also has a responsibility to equip and empower parents to fulfill their role as the primary educators of their children. This chapter examines how the effective catechetical leader can and must walk with parents on their journey of raising their children in the Catholic faith.

5. Faith for Grown Ups – Adult Catechesis: The General Directory for Catechesis reminds us that adult faith formation must be the chief form of catechesis. For too long, the Church has been paying lip service to this. The New Evangelization calls us to get serious about inviting adults to deepen their commitment to Christ. This chapter explores the unique needs of adults when it comes to faith formation, the ways in which adults learn, and strategies for engaging adults in quality faith formation experiences.

6. Young, Not Youth – Catechesis and Young Adults: Young adults are facing challenges that are increasingly complex and overwhelming. The Gospel of Jesus Christ holds the potential for transforming the lives of young adults and providing them with the foundation they need to live with hope and confidence as they begin to make their way through adulthood. This chapter explores the unique needs of young adults and how the effective catechetical leader can provide faith formation opportunities that respond to those needs.

7. The Young Church of Today – Adolescent Catechesis: Too often, adolescents are treated as a group to be entertained until they transition to adulthood. This chapter examines the needs of today’s youth and identifies how the effective catechetical leader can provide meaningful faith formation experiences for young people to deepen their relationship with Christ and the Church.

8. Let the Children Come to Me – Catechesis for School Age Children: While children of school age possess great spiritual potential, and are in their formative years for faith development, they are also receiving competing messages from a variety of sources that create challenges for faith formation. This chapter explores the complexities of catechizing children today and provides insights into how the catechetical leader can ensure that faith formation for children is not just one activity among many but rather as the opportunity to develop an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

9. Bridging the Gap – Catechesis for Those with Special Needs: While the catechetical leader need not be an expert in special needs education, it is imperative that he or she have an awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities. This chapter discusses the variety of special needs that a catechetical leader may encounter in parish faith formation, as well as general principles for becoming a more inclusive faith formation community.

10. A Unique Community of Faith – Catechesis in the Catholic School: Many parish catechetical leaders are entrusted with the responsibility for catechesis in both the parish religious education program and the Catholic school. This chapter explores how the catechetical leader handles this complex dual responsibility and builds unity and cohesion between the parish RE program and the Catholic school.