



Diocese of Brooklyn Online Diocesan Management

The Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, is the 5th largest diocese in the United States with one and a half million people identifying themselves as Catholic in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens.

CHALLENGE

The greatest challenge facing Ted Musco, the Executive Director School of Evangelization, was a System of Records for their 90 schools, 186 parishes, and at the time - 6,000 catechists. According to Ted, “we could never find anything when we needed it.”

With no practical way to organize and record transcripts for their catechists, and no existing program to assess the strengths and weakness of the parish and school programs, they turned to Catholic Faith Technologies with a wish list:

- Replace a room of over-stuffed file cabinets through technology. A system of records on a single platform. One place to go for organizing and tracking certification for several hundred related institutions and thousands of users.
- A way to track external activities, participation in live events, and completion of required courses.
- The ability to create customized certifications.
- Track strengths and weaknesses in the parish and school programs (both online & off-line assessments.)
- Create reports combining assessments for different levels and different programs.
- Affordable and scalable



SOLUTION

Following the initial launch of the platform in 2014, it was determined that ease of use was tremendous, and the system provided significant value in the saving of time and money while establishing a baseline for the upcoming year. Key solutions were the ability to apply bulk credits and to customize certification for activities or events. Today, Ted Musco reports an enthusiasm for the online catechist program, pointing out that the key to developing today's Catholic leaders and teachers is the same as developing learners in any organization.

1. It needs to be mobile - with access any time, anywhere and from any device.
2. Learning needs to be personalized, allowing self-drivers to pursue their own paths, discover and curate their own learning.
3. It should be social, offering opportunities for collaboration.
4. It needs to be engaging, delivered in microbursts.
5. Learning needs to be rewarded, with recognition and certifications.

As a result, their 6,000 catechists have grown, with the number now approaching 7,000 with growth across the board; teachers, youth ministers, parishes. There has been a marked increase in confidence among catechists and leaders. Part of this is from knowing that the learning they're receiving is contemporary - preparing them for today's learners. Ease of use, personal choice, and affordability are other factors.

In May of 2016, 200 catechists were awarded certification during their annual presentation ceremony. In 2017, the number approached 800.

In addition to catechist management and certification, the program for tracking student progress was also successful. This year, Brooklyn will be using the platform in over 300 institutions to assess areas of understanding or weakness in grades 3, 5, and 7. This allows concentration on the areas that need further instruction, beginning with teachers pursuing those areas in their own continuing education. It's a snapshot approach that results in the diocese's ability to deliver continuity in the teaching of the faith.

THE FUTURE

The future of the platform is exciting, with a focus on increasing content and opportunities through the platform. Musco cites the collaborative approach to creating great content as a huge benefit. For example, during a recent roundtable discussion, several topics pertinent to today's students were identified. The Archdiocese of Chicago is working on Methodology content, while the Archdiocese of Cincinnati is tackling Theology of the Body. CFT will then create the assessments, guides and lessons using this solid Catholic content....and it will be shared through the CFT Resource Library.