

Objective: The confirmands will learn:

- Why the Catechism of the New Apostolic Church (CNAC) was written.
- The structure of the Catechism of the New Apostolic Church Question and Answer (CNAC-QA) book and how it corresponds to the CNAC.
- How to use the CNAC-QA book.

Contents: Catechism of the New Apostolic Church
Catechism of the New Apostolic Church Question and Answer Book

1. Lead-In

Ask
Explain

What is a Catechism?

Catechism stems from the Greek word "katechein,, a word used in the sense of teaching. In early Christian times adults were given instruction before and after baptism and those doing the teaching were called catechists.

When Christian teachings were put into writing these documents were called catechisms.

Ask

When do you think the first catechism originated and what was the content?

The first catechisms came into being in the 8th century. These catechisms contained the Creed and the Lord's Prayer with explanations.

In the 13th century the Ten Commandments and the Sacraments were added, also with explanations.

At the time of the Reformation several catechisms were written.

2. Catechism of the NAC

Explain

Early in the development of the New Apostolic Church Luther's *Small Catechism* was used.

Questions and Answers concerning the New Apostolic Faith first appeared in 1938 under Chief Apostle Bischoff; it was edited by the Apostles Council. In 1992, its final revision was completed.

Subsequent alterations were made in 2005. Thereafter there has been no further edition.

Ask

So, if over a long period of time we have already had books explaining our faith why was it necessary to compile a new Catechism?

**Listen to
Answers and
supplement**

Developments in doctrine had taken place and these were no longer reflected in the Questions and Answers book.

With the development of the Church new questions of faith arose that had to be dealt with.

Some matters of faith had to be elaborated on or answered in more depth to provide a greater understanding.

The language used in previous publications had become out-dated and to a degree contained words that were understood only by members of the Church.

Ask

What does the content of the Catechism contain?

**Elaborate and
supplement
answers**

It is important to always remember that the foundation for the doctrine of the Church is Holy Scripture. So, the core statements of the Bible's message, as contained in both the Old and New Testaments are presented in the Catechism.

Beyond that the Catechism will describe the insights that have developed since the renewed occupation of the Apostle ministry in the early nineteenth century, which are formulated in the New Apostolic Creed.

What you therefore can expect in the contents of this publication is a confirmation of old concepts that have not changed, some old concepts that have been revised in the light of our new understanding, and then also some totally new concepts that have not been explained before.

The Catechism of the New Apostolic Church has the following chapters

- 1 The revelations of God
- 2 The Creed
- 3 The triune God
- 4 Mankind in need of redemption
- 5 God's commandments
- 6 The church of Jesus Christ
- 7 Ministry
- 8 The sacraments
- 9 Life after death
- 10 The doctrine of future things
- 11 From the history of Christianity
- 12 Divine service, acts of blessing, and pastoral care
- 13 New Apostolic Christians and their life of faith

3. The Catechism of the New Apostolic Church in Questions and Answers

Ask

Why would we want the Catechism in *Questions and Answers*?

Explain

The question-and-answer format has already been in use for centuries in various Christian catechisms, and has also had a long tradition in our Church. The underlying didactic methodology has often proven itself. It has also been used in teaching Confirmation Instruction for a long time. Beyond that, it is also well suited for imparting Christian doctrine.

The greatest emphasis in the drafting of this reference work was on reader friendliness, which is why the text contains many complete Bible citations. This offers readers the benefit of being able to reference these Bible passages even when they do not have a Bible on hand. This is particularly important when it comes to those countries in which not everyone owns a Bible. Thus the reference work not only serves to help members become acquainted with our doctrine, but also provides a good overview of statements in Scripture that are essential to our doctrine.

Terms that are not necessarily comprehensible to everyone at first glance are explained in detail the first time they appear. In order to allow for the use of the Catechism in conjunction with the *Catechism in Questions and Answers*, the latter corresponds exactly to the CNAC in terms of overall structure. Thus the *Catechism in Questions and Answers* can also be used as a workbook in conjunction with the Catechism. Thereby it also fulfils the purpose of helping individuals understand the content of the Catechism in their personal study.

An important objective in its production was to provide the greatest possible level of clarity and comprehension. Different means and methods were used in order to achieve this.

- By way of 750 questions and answers that build upon one another, readers are taken by the hand, so to speak, and led through the content of the Catechism.

- In order to allow readers to comprehend subject matter that is at times complex, the topics have been structured into a large number of individual questions and answers. This allows for shorter trains of thought to be incorporated into the work.

- The text is formulated in a format that is as easy to remember as possible, without using many technical terms.

- Overly detailed descriptions of the various trains of thought leading up to specific doctrinal statement have been largely avoided.

- For certain terms, explanations have either been incorporated or expanded further on the basis of those already contained in the Catechism.

- The selected pictures serve as an invitation for readers to pause for a moment. Some of them serve to emphasize the texts to which they have been assigned, while others merely serve as illustration. This breaks up the monotony of the type and serves for visual appeal, which leads to improved readability.

4. **Ways in which the Catechism will be helpful**

Ask

Of what use and benefit will the Catechism be?

Elaborate and supplement answers

Uniformity in sharing faith with others

The Christian faith is intended to be shared with others. Already in early times, Christians were instructed to profess their faith and testify to others. But to share your faith it is necessary to know what you believe. With the Catechism great international uniformity will be brought to doctrinal statements while at the same time taking other languages and cultures into account. In this manner, the content will serve to deepen the knowledge and strengthen the faith of New Apostolic Christians

Reference for ministers and members

The Catechism is therefore firstly a reference work for ministers and members alike to be clear on what the New Apostolic Church stands for.

Source of information for interested public

In addition, however, there is also the interested public, those who would like to know more about the Church and its activities. For them the Catechism is a source of information that has expressly been written for this purpose in a language that is easy to understand. With this publication as a reference those who are interested will be able to gain a clear insight into the New Apostolic faith.

Positioning of the Church among Christian Churches

A comprehensive presentation of our doctrine also allows for a clear positioning of our Church within the spectrum of the other Christian Churches. On the one hand, the many common points of the Christian faith are revealed, and on the other, the unmistakable and unique profile of our Church is made clear. Thus the Catechism presents both sides, namely, that which binds us together and that which distinguishes us. The presentation of these differences is not intended to exclude others or close ourselves off to them, but can rather be a starting point for fruitful dialogue with other Christians.

Form the basis for all formal instruction

The Catechism will form the basis for all instruction within the Church. Sunday school, religious instruction and confirmation classes, as well as instructional meetings for youth and ministers will be based on the content of the Catechism.

The main points

I also want to ... **... know how to use the Catechism in *Questions and Answers*!**

Homework The confirmands page through the Question and Answer book of the Catechism and write down a question which they find interesting.