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Preface

This book, arising from an international catechetical conference held in Rome in 2009, examines what the Church, in her recent documents on catechesis, understands by “the pedagogy of God” and what the relationship is of this pedagogy to the discipline and practice of catechesis and to catechist formation. We hope that this volume will be particularly useful for catechetical leaders in the Church. The language of “the pedagogy of God” is not very familiar to many of us. As a result, it is not yet significantly influencing our approach to catechetics or our formation programs for catechists. Yet it is crucial. The pedagogy of God provides a framework for understanding the nature and purpose of catechesis: a close examination of the Congregation for the Clergy’s *General Directory for Catechesis* (1997) and of John Paul II’s *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), in particular, enables us to see that this pedagogy provides us with universally valid principles that are the necessary foundations for the communication of Revelation. This focus upon the pedagogy of God is rooted in the current renewal of catechesis proposed by the Church. The retrieval of this concept is a key part of the more general theological *ressourcement* following the Second Vatican Council.

In this book, the central features of this pedagogy are traced, including some of the scriptural roots of the concept and its patristic development. The relationship of God’s pedagogy to catechetical formation is explored and implications are then traced into the concrete areas of doctrinal and moral formation, formation in prayer, sacramental and liturgical formation, and Christian initiation. Particular chapters focus upon implications of the pedagogy of God for the catechetical methods we employ and for the catechist’s understanding of his or her own vocation.

Where it seemed appropriate, the original style of a conference paper or address has been maintained. In other cases, some adjustments have been made to adapt the paper given at the Conference for this publication.

Many have collaborated on this project. The translation work by Anne Harriss, Anne St. John-Hall and Bernard Farrell-Roberts has been invaluable; and

the work of Colleen Rainone at Franciscan University of Steubenville, with her kindly and patient reminders and proofreading of the text, has facilitated much of the process for completion. May this book serve the coming of God's Kingdom as Christ was born of Mary in Bethlehem.