

POLICY FOR HOME-BASED CATECHESIS

Diocese of Raleigh

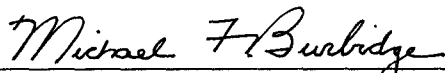
The Bishop of the Diocese of Raleigh, in conjunction with the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis, supports those parents who provide home-based catechesis for their children. As chief catechist in the Diocese, the Bishop is responsible for the total catechetical mission of the local church. It is his responsibility to issue guidelines and regulations concerning religious formation and to ascertain that suitable catechetical materials are available (*Code of Canon Law*, c. 775§1).

Home-based catechesis denotes that a family is assuming responsibility for religious instruction and formation in the home, as is their right. The *Code of Canon Law* further states that Catholic parents have the duty to select the most suitable means for providing Catholic education for their children (see canon 793§1). Likewise, in the *Rite of Baptism*, parents are reminded that they are to be the first teachers of their children and promise to keep the flame of faith alive in their children's hearts.

After discerning their ability to provide thorough and authentic faith formation for their children, parents must communicate their intention to provide home-based catechesis to the local pastor or parish catechetical leader. The pastor or catechetical leader will provide the parents with the applicable diocesan and parish expectations for catechesis and sacramental preparation (see canons 777 and 843§2). Responsibilities of both the home and the parish will be clearly addressed. The pastor or parish catechetical leader will assist in the procurement of catechetical texts and resources and provide opportunities for formation and support.

It is important to keep in mind that "home-based catechesis of children is the cooperative effort between the children, their parents, parish leadership and the diocesan bishop" (*National Directory for Catechesis*, n.61,A,3). While children in home-based catechesis are not required to attend parish programs, it is strongly suggested that they participate in parish sacramental preparation in order to share faith with their peers and grow in their understanding of the life of the parish community. Parents may choose home-based catechesis. According to the *National Directory for Catechesis*, "All parents have an obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the Church. Since their children are being initiated into the life of the Church, which is fundamentally realized in the local parish, parents who provide catechesis for their children in their homes should participate fully in the life of the local church. They should celebrate the Sunday Eucharist in the local parish, involve themselves in its charitable works, and attend appropriate training and formation sessions that the parish or diocese provides" (n.61,A,3).

The pastor and parish catechetical leader, together with the parents will determine the readiness of the child for the celebration of a sacrament as stated in the diocesan sacramental guidelines. It is the goal of the Diocese of Raleigh and parishes to assist parents in fostering and facilitating the faith development of the child.



Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Raleigh
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