



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
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Dear Parents:

I am writing to you in response to questions about the Lifewise Academy presence in some of our diocesan parish communities. This is a program with volunteers in an organized effort that invites public school students to participate in a Bible study during the school day. This initiative is communicated via the local public school districts where you might receive the information and an invitation to opt in your child to the Lifewise Academy sessions.

I would stress that the Lifewise Academy and its volunteers are well-intentioned. We all recognize our society is in need of additional exposure to the Christian faith.

However, after research and discussions with Lifewise community leaders, some areas of concern arose regarding the program content for Catholic students. There are several items in the Lifewise curriculum that are in conflict with the Catechism and our Catholic Faith.

These areas of concern stem from their Statement of Faith, which is not Catholic, and the fact that an alternative Catholic version is not available. Examples of conflict include a statement that is contrary to our sacramental understanding of salvation and the fact that Bible used in the instruction does not contain all the books included in what we as Catholics understand to be the fullness of Sacred Scripture.

At a crucial stage in your child's faith formation, confusion regarding their faith can be harmful. It is important that you as parents are aware of the effects of these and other conflicts in belief presented through this program. Should you receive information from your school about Lifewise Academy, **I caution you against participating in this program.**

We are encouraged by families who are committed to teaching their children the faith through the study of Scripture. Parents who are interested in Bible studies faithful to Catholic teaching can visit www.scdiocese.org/catechesis for a list of Bible study options for children and youth. Parents will also find additional explanations of what the Catholic faith teaches, and information on how contradictory information regarding Christian teaching can have a negative effect on children's faith.

God bless you in your commitment to teach the faith to your children.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John E. Keehner
Bishop of Sioux City