

Handbook for Religious Education

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OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

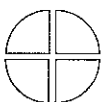
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HANDBOOK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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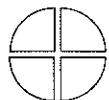
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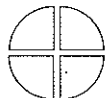
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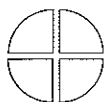


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DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

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Office of the Bishop

Foreword

I am extremely pleased with the publication of this *Handbook for Religious Education*. It is the result of years of research, dialogue, deliberation, prayerful discernment, and hard work by many individuals.

This handbook responds to the expressed need of parents and teachers for such guidelines. It will be a valuable tool for parish communities, families and religious educators as they work together to know and live the gospel.

Lifetime religious education is an integrated journey encompassing divinely revealed content and the personal mystery of faith and grace in every believer. It flourishes when the parish community, family and school of religion share the same vision, use complementary language, and reinforce one another. The implementation of the statutes, guidelines, and pastoral and practical helps contained herein can provide that unity of voice and vision that we as Church are called to live.

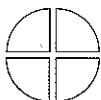
I am grateful for all the persons who contributed to this document - Bishop Rueger as Vicar for Education, members of the staff at the Office of Religious Education, and many others. They have given invaluable assistance to me in the carrying out of my eminent responsibility as chief catechist of the diocese.

As chief shepherd and teacher, I entrust these guidelines to you with the understanding that they will be implemented in every parish and Catholic school.

Bishop of Worcester

+ Timothy Shanley

September 21, 1993
Feast of St. Matthew
Apostle and Evangelist



INTRODUCTION

In his Apostolic Letter on Catechesis, *Catechesi Tradendae*, Pope John Paul II said: "The more the Church ... gives catechesis priority over other works and undertakings the results of which could be more spectacular, the more she finds in catechesis a strengthening of her internal life as a community of believers and of her external activity as a missionary Church". (#15)

This handbook is a concrete effort to assist families, parishes and schools to give life-long catechesis this kind of priority. Foundational to the handbook is the carefully considered rationale about the instructional and foundational aspects of catechesis and the different ways in which these aspects can be programmed. Pastoral sensitivity will help priests, DRE's and catechetical boards to decide how best to implement these aspects in their local situation.

The publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* makes this handbook especially timely and useful. The catechism has recaptured the Church's earliest approach to Christian initiation in which neophytes are supported by a welcoming community of faith and introduced to a life-long process of conversion. As they move towards incorporation in the community, its treasures — creed, sacraments, moral tradition and prayer — are shared with them. This handbook presumes and advocates the same model for all of our catechetical efforts.

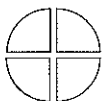
The purpose of catechesis, as Vatican II enunciates it, is "to foster a faith that is living, conscious and active." In an increasingly secularized world this is a great challenge and yet the innate hunger of the human heart remains. It was expressed by St. Augustine 1600 years ago: "You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts will find no rest until they rest in you."

Catechists are privileged — by the personal witness of their own faith and by their organized programs of instruction — to stir up these deepest longings of the human heart and to point to their fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ.

A deep personal relationship with Christ is the "living faith" towards which catechesis directs all its efforts. It is this faith relationship that will then change hearts, attitudes and values and so change the world around us.

May the end-result of all our efforts be to produce Catholic Christians who can say with Paul: "I have come to rate all as loss in the light of the surpassing knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ. For his sake I have forfeited everything; I have accounted all else rubbish so that Christ may be my wealth ... I wish to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection ... I give no thought to what lies behind but push on to what is ahead. My entire attention is on the finish line as I run towards the prize to which God calls me — life on high in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:8ff)

Msgr. Francis D. Kelly



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THOSE WHO HAVE MADE THIS HANDBOOK POSSIBLE ARE MANY.

This handbook is the effort of dedicated members both past and present of the Religious Education Office in the Diocese of Worcester. It is with special thanks that we acknowledge Mary D'Amato, Mary Hovenesian, Patricia Halpin, Elizabeth Marcil, Kathleen Cushing, Alice Smith, Mary Rose Zaccari MPV and Frank Kartheiser. A special note of appreciation goes to Mary Hovenesian who tirelessly edited and directed the book to its publication.

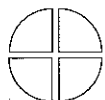
For generous assistance at various phases of research and typescript preparation, we are in debt to Martha Tower, Priscilla Valiton, Ann Markvenas and Pat Naple. For their suggestions and assistance with the layouts and charts, we thank the talented crew at American Printing Company.

A special work of thanks to Monsignor Francis Kelly, not only for his introduction, but also for the many helpful catechetical and theological insights that were incorporated into the text.

To the Bishop's Cabinet, especially with fond memory Monsignor Lawrence Deery, and the many readers for their invaluable advice and challenging insights, the Office is extremely grateful.

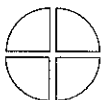
Finally the Office of Religious Education owes a deep sense of gratitude to our Vicar for Education, Bishop George Reuger, for his affirmation and encouragement and to our Ordinary, Bishop Timothy Harrington, for his continuing support, faith and trust in the Office.

Msgr. Louis R. Piermarini



ABBREVIATIONS

- CT = *Catechesi Tradendae*: Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis in Our Time. John Paul II, 1979
- CCC = *Catéchisme de l'Eglise Catholique*: Catechism of the Catholic Church, John Paul II, 1992
- CI = Christian Initiation, General Introduction. 1972
- Chr. L. = *Christifideles Laici*: Apostolic Exhortation on Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People, John Paul II, 1988
- DH = *Dignitatis Humanae*: Declaration on Religious Freedom, Paul VI, 1965
- DMWC = Directory for Masses with Children, Paul VI, 1973
- EN = *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: On Evangelization in the Modern World, Paul VI, 1975
- FC = *Familiaris Consortio*: Apostolic Exhortation—The Role of Christian Family in the Modern World, John Paul II, 1981
- GE = *Gravissimum Educationis*: Declaration on Christian Education, Paul VI, 1965
- GIRM = General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Paul VI, 1975
- GS = *Gaudium et Spes*: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Paul VI, 1965
- LG = *Lumen Gentium*: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Paul VI, 1964
- NCD = *Sharing the Light of Faith*: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1977
- SC = *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Paul VI, 1963
- TTJD = *To Jesus as Jesus Did*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973



PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION/CATECHESIS

I. INTRODUCTION

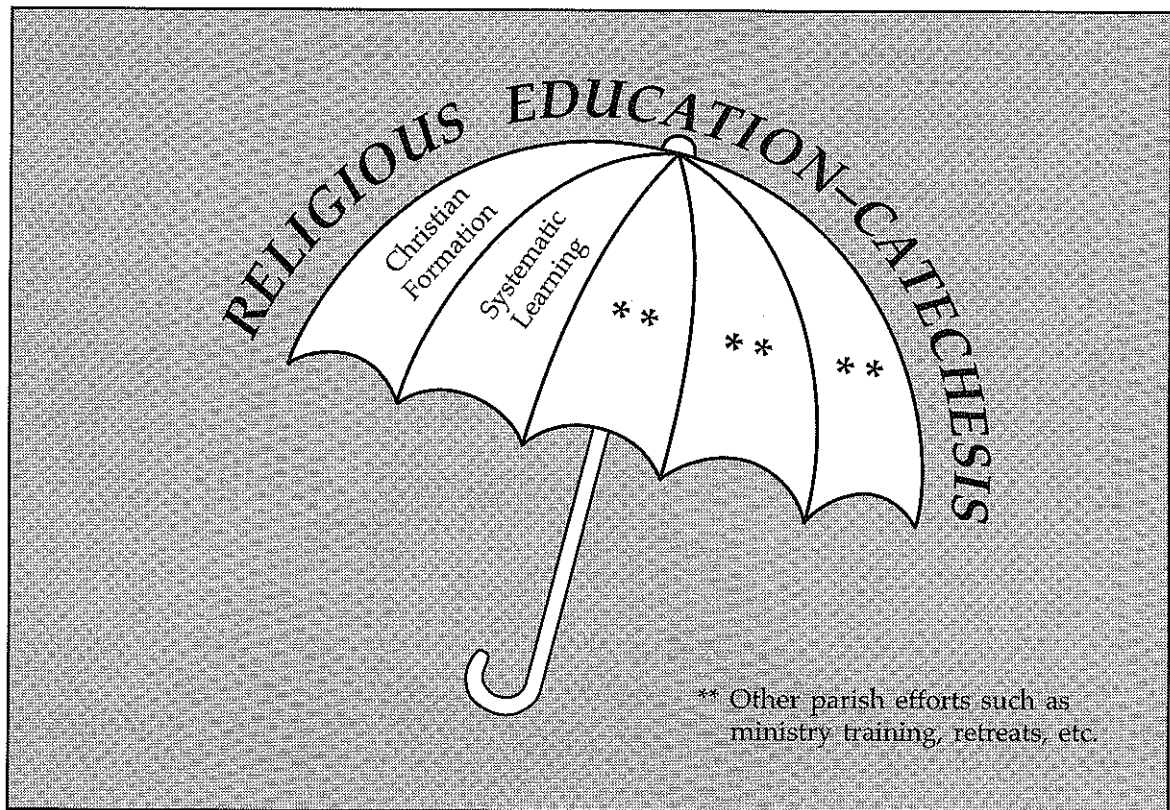


Diagram #1

- #1 The person and message of Jesus provides the foundation upon which a life of faith, hope and love is built. Christ's own role as prophet, priest and servant king comes to life in the mission of His people as they proclaim and teach God's word, celebrate the sacred mysteries and serve others. This mission is essentially one: to bring about God's kingdom. (EN #4)
- #2 The parish is the context in which persons learn to proclaim, celebrate, explore and live faith together as Catholic Christians. Each parish is an extension of the diocese, the body of Christ present in a particular place. Because of its nature, the parish has the same mission as that of the universal church realized through a three-fold ministry of word, worship and service within a faith community. Thus each parish has the responsibility of providing for each and every member life-long, continuing religious education consistent with diocesan guidelines and the teaching of the universal church. (Magisterium)
- #3 Effective catechesis/religious education occurs when word, worship and service are so integrated that faith is proclaimed and becomes living, conscious and active through the light of instruction, formation, liturgy and service. (*Dia.* #1) Indeed, the role of religious education within the ministry of the church is to nurture a mature faith in each person. (NCD #32, 33)



#4

It is policy in the Diocese of Worcester that every parish provide total religious education/catechesis including specific attention to systematic learning and formation. (*Dia. #1*) **Systematic Learning** refers to the planned programs whose purpose is to teach the authentic and complete message of Christ and his church adapted to the needs and capacities of the learners. (NCD #264) **Christian formation**, however, refers to planned programs which focus on initial celebrations of and fuller participation in sacramental life and other formative activities of the parish community. (NCD #32-33)

#5

All religious education programs require adequate staffing by trained teachers and catechists and supervision by a certified Director or Coordinator. Small parishes, unable to support full-time trained personnel are encouraged to combine resources with other parishes to accomplish this task on a regional basis. The fundamental tasks of parish religious education remain:

- to proclaim Christ's message
- to participate in efforts to develop community
- to lead people to worship and prayer
- to motivate the community of believers to serve others (NCD #213)

Although programs may vary from parish to parish the above components are integral to all.

II. THE PROCESS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION/CATECHESIS

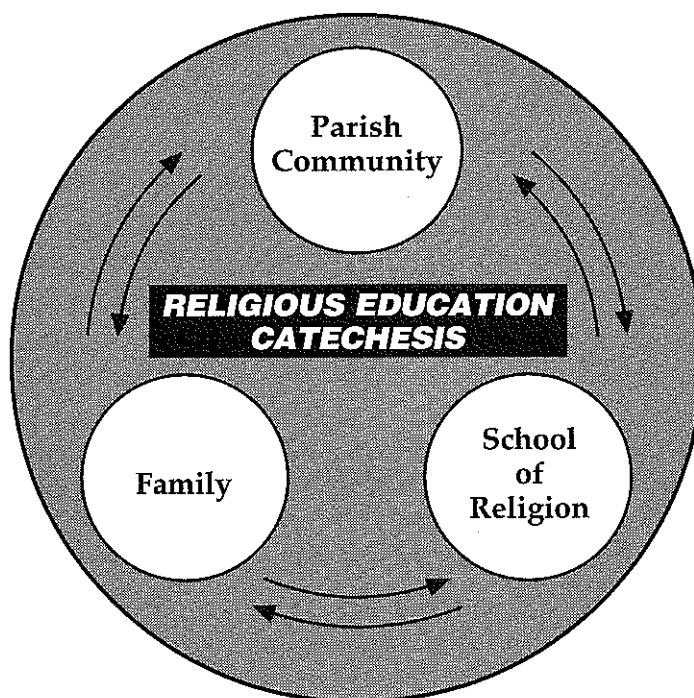
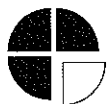


Diagram # 2

#6

In a broad sense, religious education occurs spontaneously and in many settings. However, within the parish setting there are at least three major educational agencies which have distinct and complementary roles in the process of religious education: the **family**, the **parish community** and the **school of religion**. (*Dia. #2*) Although families comprise the parish community and the school of religion operates in and/or for the parish community, when considering the three groups in relation to religious education it is helpful to look at them as three separate entities or agencies. **Total religious education will be most effective when all three agencies; family, parish community, and school of religion have the same vision, use complementary language, and reinforce one another.**



A. SYSTEMATIC LEARNING:

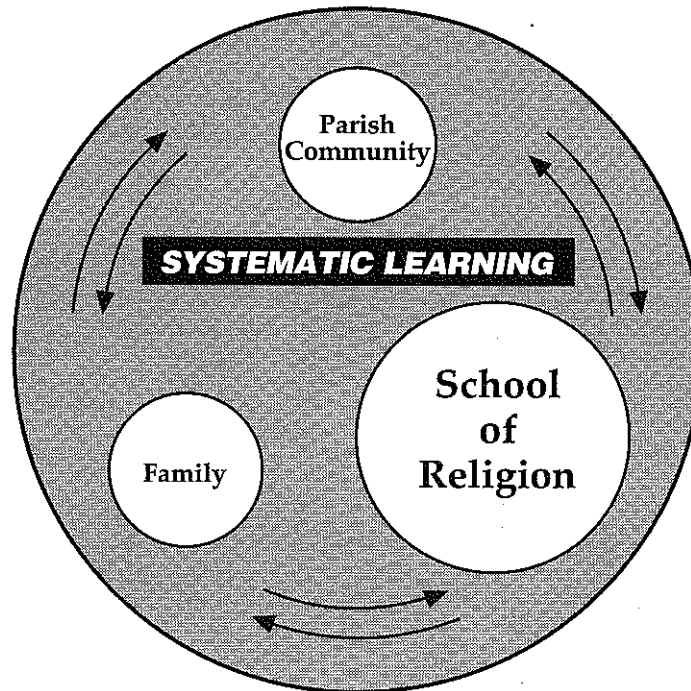


Diagram # 3

#7 **Systematic learning** (instructional) programs reside for the most part in the domain of the school of religion. (*Dia. #3*) The **school of religion** is the name given to systematic programs whether in the parish setting or in the Catholic school which are planned, sponsored and relied upon to insure that all members learn about the Catholic Christian faith. As chief contributing agent to systematic learning, the school of religion relies upon the following elements:

1. the development and use of properly sequenced and age appropriate curriculum;
2. competent teachers who study and practice the faith and develop the art of using teaching methods suited to the capabilities of the learners;
3. credible goals and objectives which can be measured quantitatively.

#8 The family and parish community complement the efforts of the school of religion through the powerful teaching of their witness and example. When they support the work of the school of religion they contribute to its effectiveness. (*Dia. #3*)

#9 Called to be communities of faith, Catholic schools share in the educational ministry of the church. They serve families, parish communities and the diocese by providing an academic learning experience infused with Catholic values. **Catholic schools are responsible for a systematic learning component of religious education. However, catechesis for the sacraments resides within the domain of the parish community.**



B. CHRISTIAN FORMATION

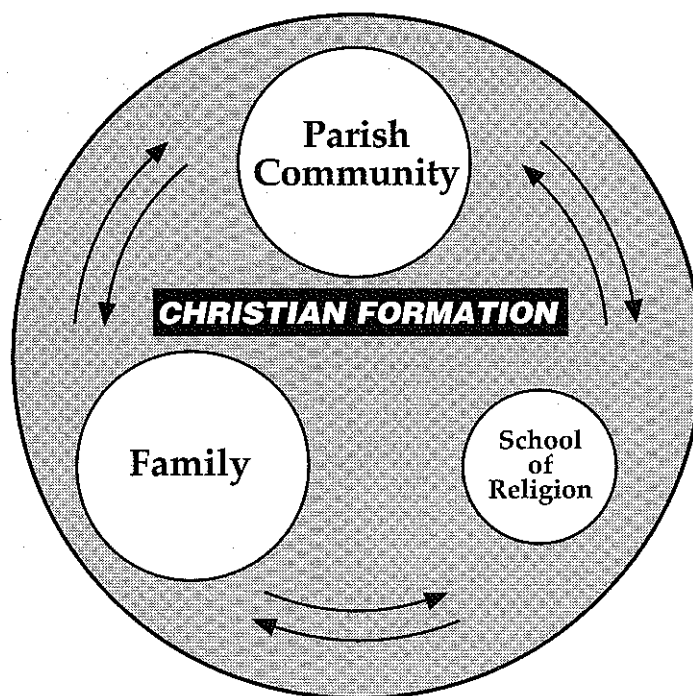
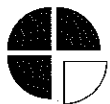


Diagram # 4

- #10 **Christian formation**, with its emphasis upon community celebration and full participation in parish life, resides primarily in the domain of the family and the parish community. It includes sacramental and other formational activity. (*Dia.* #4) Its goal, however, is growth in faith which cannot be measured quantitatively.
- #11 The family continually teaches both intentionally and unintentionally by the way it celebrates and lives out the gospel message. The family experience is the primary factor in establishing basic values, encouraging individual prayer practices, setting patterns of involvement in the life of the faith community, and modeling the importance of religion in daily living.
- #12 Similarly, the parish community knowingly or unknowingly teaches continually through liturgical celebration and the manner it lives out the gospel message. The vitality of parish life is likewise a major factor in determining people's basic perceptions of what church is, why we celebrate together, why we are all called to ministry, and other important communal concepts.
- #13 Although the primary responsibility for formation lies with the family and the parish community, the school of religion plays a complementary role. Some formational sessions include instructional components with planned programs specific to the learning objective. Such intentional instructional activities might include teaching through retreat experiences, preparation for sacraments and training for social ministry. Competent catechists who are active participants in parish worship and mission and who have developed the interpersonal skills necessary to sponsor others into fuller church life are needed for the formational aspect of the program.
- #14 Independent registration, scheduling, staffing and goal setting for systematic learning and for formational activities is necessary to emphasize the distinctive characteristics of the two aspects of the total religious education program. Separate attention to systematic learning and Christian formation:
- facilitates realistic goal-setting
 - renders the most appropriate preparation and support for teachers and catechists
 - encourages evaluation and improvement of the systematic learning portion of the program



III SETTING A DIRECTION: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

- #15 "Every parish needs a coherent well-integrated... plan which provides opportunities for all parishioners to encounter the gospel message and respond by fostering community and giving service." (NCD #224)

A. PLANNING

Vision

- #16 The vision of church set forth in the National Catechetical Directory challenges each parish to help people recognize their baptismal call to live the gospel in word and deed. In light of this, it becomes incumbent upon parish leadership to articulate a dream or vision of religious education that all the parishioners can affirm. A plan for a religious education program on the parish level takes into consideration the Church's entire mission. It reflects the vision of the religious education office which in turn is a part of a total pastoral plan. (NCD #221, 222)
- #17 One of the first tasks for parish leadership in setting the direction for religious education is to listen: first to one another, and secondly to the parish as a whole. This can be done in a variety of ways including individual discussions, group meetings, questionnaire, telephone calls, to name a few. After listening to one another and to the people of the parish, the next step for the parish leadership is to respond to what has been recommended. The process of prioritizing what has been recommended will result in a parish vision.

Goals

- #18 The next step is to develop a goal statement of what the parish hopes to accomplish. A starting point for this process is the establishment of practical ways to begin to realize that vision. (See "Practical Helps" for procedure for formulating goals.)
- #19 Periodically, a review or evaluation of the goals should take place by the parish leadership to assess the viability of the goals set forth and to analyze their effectiveness in realizing the parish vision.

Program Design

- #20 Although we share a common religious heritage, effective program designs will vary from parish to parish. PREP, Parish Religious Education Evaluation and Planning, is a tool developed by the Office of Religious Education to assist in this programming. (For a full explanation of PREP see "Practical Helps".)

Record Keeping

- #21 Comprehensive, accurate records of persons and programs are necessary to any well functioning religious education program. The permanent records required for each learner include such data as attendance, family information, sacramental formation, and instructors and curriculum materials used in systematic learning. Records of catechists' basic and ongoing formation are also a part of a parish permanent file. (cf. "Personnel" #51.)
- #22 Effective planning and evaluation in the school of religion depend on easy access to concise records of programs and materials used over time. A permanent parish file of the Annual Report Form provides a valuable resource for this information. Copies of forms provided by the diocese are included in "Practical Helps". However, parishes are encouraged to expand and develop their record keeping to meet their own specific needs.



B. EVALUATION

#23

The National Catechetical Directory recommends that all religious education programs including those for adults should be evaluated periodically. (NCD #224) It is understood that the opportunities for growth and service in religious education are extensive and unending. These opportunities, however, must be reviewed regularly to make certain that they continue to satisfy the needs of the people and the goals of the parish. An evaluation, if done well:

- clarifies the priorities of the religious education program
- affects the way parish resources are used
- helps ensure parish participation and support for the program and the personnel who work in it

#24

The NCD expects diocesan religious education offices to "establish and provide instruments for evaluating programs, including both their cognitive and affective dimensions." (NCD #218) PREP (see "Practical Helps") may also serve as an evaluation tool to assess the growth and effectiveness of the religious education program. The Office of Religious Education is able to modify the profile to accommodate an evaluation process for the entire program or for a specific area such as systematic learning or adult education. The National Catholic Educational Association has developed another evaluative tool entitled "ACRE". (See "Practical Helps" for an explanation.)

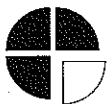
C. INDICATORS OF AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM

#25

Based on its vision and goals, each parish program will be tailored to the specific needs of its people. Nevertheless, an effective program will be characterized by consistent effort towards and attention to:

- planning, goal setting and evaluation
- competent leadership and trained teachers and catechists
- a vision of religious education as on-going and life-long
- teachers and catechists who are interested, dedicated and prepared
- well-structured programs attentive to four areas: word, community, worship and service balancing attention to traditional content with ways to live faith religiously in daily life
- a shared sense of responsibility for the program by families and the wider parish community¹

¹ Francis D. Kelly, Peter L. Benson, and Michael J. Donahue, *Toward Effective Parish Religious Education for Children and Young People: A National Study Report* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Education Association, 1986), pp. 48-50.



D. CONCLUSION

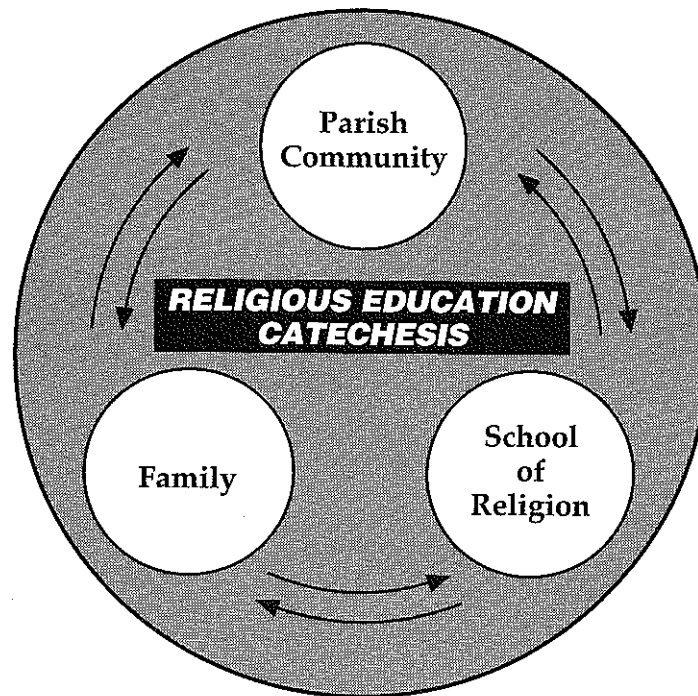


Diagram # 2

#26

Within the context of a total parish plan, each person is nourished through the ministry of word, worship, and service in community. Family, parish community and school of religion operate as a cohesive unit in proclaiming the Faith and making it living, conscious and active. (*Dia. #2*) In other words, systematic learning and Christian formation, though different, complement each other in a well-planned program. In this way all will share in Christ's mission to build the Kingdom of God.



SYSTEMATIC LEARNING: COMPONENTS AND CONTEXT

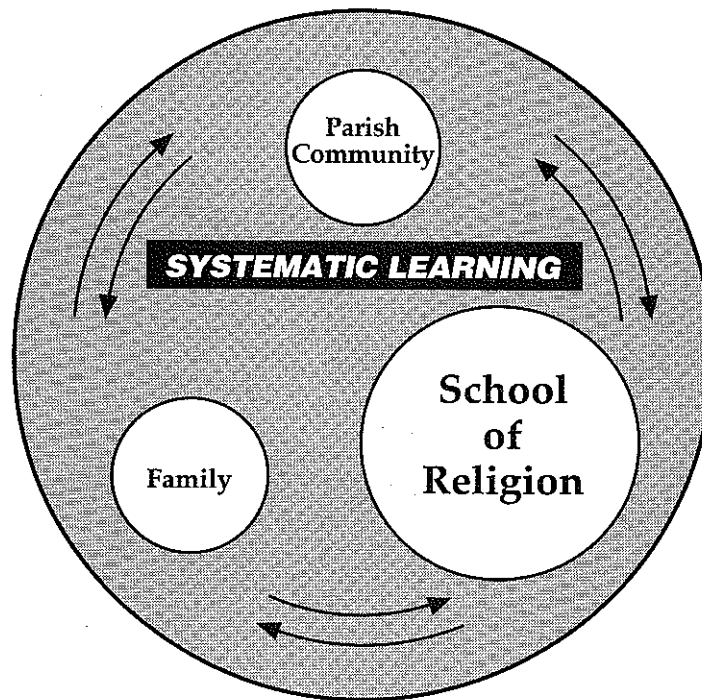


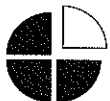
Diagram 1: Dynamics of Systematic Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

...it is Christ...who is taught - and it is Christ alone who teaches - anyone else teaches...[as] Christ's spokesperson... Whatever the level of responsibility in the Church, every catechist must constantly endeavor to transmit by teaching and behavior the teaching and life of Jesus. (CT #6)

#1 This handbook focuses on the **systematic learning** component of religious education (*Diagram # 1*). **Systematic learning** is essentially an instructional exercise concerned with helping persons learn about and learn how to do or express what is being taught. As an instructional endeavor this component of religious education is capable of assessment and evaluation. Unlike Christian formation which presumes a faith readiness, systematic learning can even take place in a compulsory setting among those for whom neither evangelization nor a conversion experience has yet occurred. The complementary roles of family, parish community and school of religion change when the religious education venture shifts from the systematic learning aspect of parish programming to sacramental or formational catechesis. For a complete understanding of parish religious education programming, it is necessary to read both "Systematic Learning: Components and Context" and "Christian Formation."

#2 The major responsibility of the systematic learning segment of parish programs is to teach the "authentic and complete message of Christ and His Church." (NCD #264) Thus the school of religion designs the curriculum and selects the means to teach each generation the revelation that has come from God in the timeless message of scripture and the living tradition of the Church. In transmitting this revelation, the school of religion uses the lived experience of the faith community, the official teaching of the magisterium of the church (LG #25), the scholarship of theologians, the contributions of the social scientists, proven educational strategies and the resources of modern communications. The school of religion organizes many elements to form a coherent, comprehensive and complete educational enterprise.



#3

Competent program planning implies a complete presentation of core teaching with careful attention to its unity. For this reason, this handbook also presents a curriculum sequence designed to insure that the major components of our religious heritage are introduced and substantively developed in each parish and school religious education program.

#4

COMPONENTS OF SYSTEMATIC LEARNING

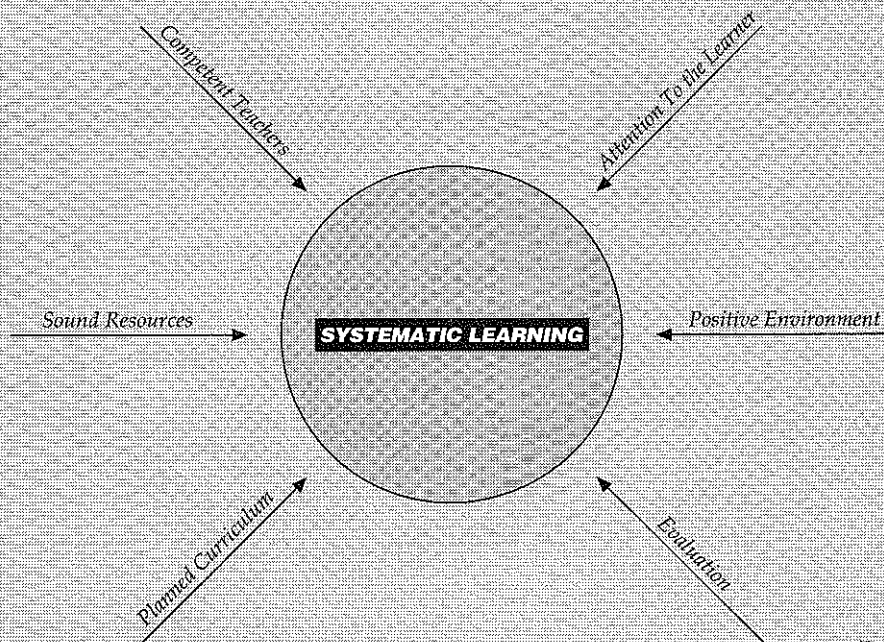


Diagram 2

#5

The effectiveness of systematic learning depends upon the successful interaction of a number of variables (Diagram #2):

1. competent and faithful teachers
2. attention paid to the learner and how learning occurs
3. careful selection of age-appropriate methods and resources
4. a positive learning environment
5. planned, sequential, comprehensive curriculum
6. evaluation

Each element impacts positively or negatively upon the religious education endeavor.

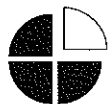
II. COMPETENT AND COMMITTED TEACHERS

#6

How are we to enable [learners] to know the meaning, the input, the fundamental requirements, the law of love, the promises and the hopes of the kingdom? (CT #35)

What we have loved
Others will love.
We must show them how.

William Wordsworth



- #7 For the teacher, the call to ministry represents a response to the invitation of God to participate in the educational mission of the church. Teaching is a relational activity engaging persons with each other, with content, with ideas and with their environment.¹ When the teacher enters into relationship with the learner, the teacher enters 'holy ground'.
- #8 Teaching is both an art and a science. As artists, teachers engage the imagination, tapping into their own creative energies and those of the student. Teaching also belongs to the social sciences since it is a planned activity subject to evaluation and responsive to psychological research.
- #9 This task requires teachers, volunteer or professional, to be theologically informed, skilled in religious education methods and committed to the faith. Teachers in diocesan religious education programs are certified through processes described in the "Personnel Handbook," #48-61.

III. THE LEARNER

- #10 Who we are is how we learn. Issues of readiness, intellectual, psycho-social and faith development, culture and motivation all influence learning. Teaching is ineffective when the learner is unable or unwilling to learn. **Learning occurs when the learner is actively engaged in the learning.** The learners' natural life rhythms and challenges are the framework in which a successful teacher operates.
- #11 Developmentalists in the twentieth century have expanded the understanding of the ways the human person develops and learns. Theorist Erik Erikson asserts that the human person develops along a continuum of life confronting existential crises at different stages. Depending on how successfully each crisis is negotiated, the human psyche is either strengthened through the acquisition of a new virtue or weakened by maladjustment. The research of psychologist Jean Piaget suggests that just as the human person develops physically at different rates, the learner develops the ability to reason at different rates. Building upon the research of Piaget, theorists Lawrence Kohlberg and Carole Gilligan have described developmental stages involved in moral decision-making. James Fowler expanded developmental theory by applying its conceptual framework to a description of how faith in the transcendent develops in humanity.
- #12 Of particular assistance to religious educators is the work of John Westerhoff which describes certain stages of human faith development. Robert Coles and Sofia Cavaletti, on the other hand, indicate that children possess surprising religious insights and a contemplative spirit which should not be stifled by a too rigid adherence to developmental stages.
- #13 Charts describing the work of the developmental theorists are included in more detail in "Practical Helps." Furthermore, the bibliography contains additional resources recommended for increased understanding of how the human person develops, learns and deepens belief.
- #14 Educational research also tells us that people learn in a variety of ways. They take in and process information in light of their preferred style of learning. The schema which follows describes one theory of learning preferences and their implications for learning.² At its best systematic learning pays close attention to the individual needs and preferred learning styles of the learner. It offers a variety of activities appropriate for all including those with special needs. (Diagram #3)

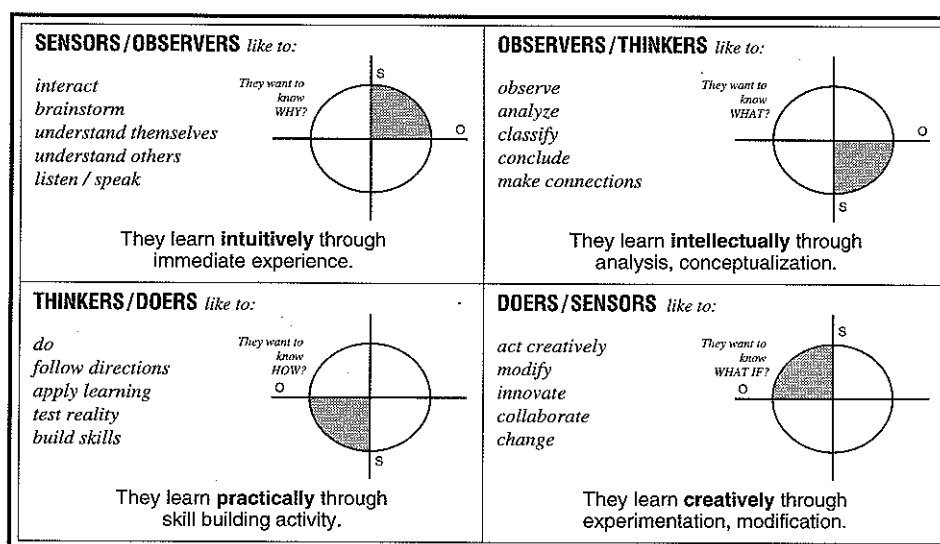
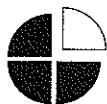


Diagram #3



IV. THE CURRICULUM

#15 What do we want them to know? What do we want them to be able to do? And how will we teach them? These questions are curriculum issues. Curriculum can be understood as "the course to be run." **Broadly speaking curriculum refers to all the experiences which occur within an educational setting both intended and not intended, hidden and explicit.** Broad curriculum questions which inform curriculum planning include:

- What are the educational purposes of the parish school of religion?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be organized effectively?
- How can we determine whether these purposes have been achieved?³

#16 **In a narrower sense, curriculum is the planned sequence of events chosen to enable the learner to know the content, acquire skills and develop identified values and beliefs.** This curriculum is both intentional and operational in character.

A. THE INTENDED CURRICULUM

#17 The intended curriculum consists of a written plan with stated goals and objectives capable of evaluation. It is both coherent and comprehensive.

The Content

#18 Comprehensive in scope, content includes all the concepts and behaviors that must be taught for the educational mission to be met. It is characterized by theological scholarship in accord with church teaching (magisterium). Content likewise respects the developmental place of the learner. It lays out a coherent plan moving in sequence from simple to complex. A later section of these guidelines will outline the curriculum expectations in terms of content and behavior.

Learning Objectives

#19 Since systematic learning is an educational activity, it is expressed through **educational goals** and **behavioral objectives**. **Goals** give broad direction to the curriculum while **objectives** describe the means to reach these goals. **Behavioral or performance objectives** answer questions such as: What would a student do to demonstrate that the content was understood? What behavior would be shown or work performed?⁴

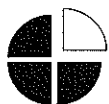
#20 Such **behavioral objectives** can be expressed in the following manner:
Upon completion of this lesson, the students will be able to:

- express in their own words 5 reasons why...
- express in a picture the feeling...
- identify in writing the moral issues in this case study...

Such specificity in objectives allows the teacher to assess the effectiveness of the process.

Capability of Assessment

#21 The systematic learning curriculum must include the means to determine whether the stated goals and objectives have been achieved. Periodic evaluation (see "Principles Handbook" #23, 24) informs the teacher what has been learned, which elements need review and which areas of the program need revision. Conventional materials designed by the teacher or provided by the publisher, or national tests like those published by the NCEA (see "Practical Helps") all serve to measure the intended curriculum.



B. THE OPERATIONAL CURRICULUM

#22 The operational curriculum includes what actually occurs in teaching: materials and teaching strategies to be used and all the ways the learner will be involved in the learning⁵. Engaging the learners in the process is a primary challenge for the teacher. Research on how people learn determines the best methods to use. In developing lesson plans, the teacher includes ways to motivate learners as well as the means to engage them actively in the lesson.

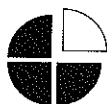
#23 Imagination, critical thinking, problem-solving, and analysis are all activities which require active participation by the learner. Benjamin S. Bloom, of the University of Chicago described a hierarchy of critical thinking activities in his book, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*. The following chart briefly describes this hierarchy beginning with knowledge, comprehension, application, and culminating with analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Using these steps, the teacher challenges learners to think more deeply about religious issues.

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

#24

<u>LOWER LEVELS</u>	
KNOWLEDGE Recall of brief concepts, facts, rules Examples: 1. to name the seven sacraments 2. to select water as a sign of baptism 3. to identify Moses	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g. define, identify, names,
COMPREHENSION Understands the meaning of material - facts and principles Examples: 1. to give three examples of how one can practice the beatitudes 2. to explain the meaning of covenant 3. to give in own words the parable of Good Samaritan	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g., words, explain, give examples.
APPLICATION The ability to use learned materials in new situations. Application of rules, concepts, principles and laws Examples: 1. to relate how having a fist fight on the playground violates the fifth commandment 2. to show a modern version of parable of Good Samaritan 3. to demonstrate with posters the relationship between creation and ecology.	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g., relates, shows, demonstrates
<u>HIGHER LEVELS</u>	
ANALYSIS To break down material into parts as related to the whole; to distinguish similarities and differences Examples: 1. to contrast qualities of Joseph to his brothers 2. to compare Joseph (Old Testament) and Jesus (New Testament) 3. to analyze ten commandments and Jesus' New Law of Love.	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g., identify, compare, contrast, analyze
SYNTHESIS Rearrange parts into a whole with emphasis on formation of new patterns Examples: 1. to formulate a code of behavior for classroom 2. compose a modern day psalm 3. to summarize a modern parable on sin and reconciliation.	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g., writes, tells, summarizes
EVALUATION (highest level) Judgments based on evidence (either internal or external criteria) Examples: 1. to explain why a society to be healthy practices the beatitudes 2. to conclude that abortion is the taking of human life 3. to judge that society has a responsibility for sick, aged, orphaned, etc.	HOW TO STATE? In terms of doing: e.g., judges, explains, concludes

-(Source Unknown)



Diagrams #4 and #5 suggest activities which translate into exciting occasions for learning when incorporated into the lesson plan and become part of the operational curriculum. Learners may become believers who not only know about God and God's church but know why and how they know and who express their faith in a life reflective of the values of Jesus.

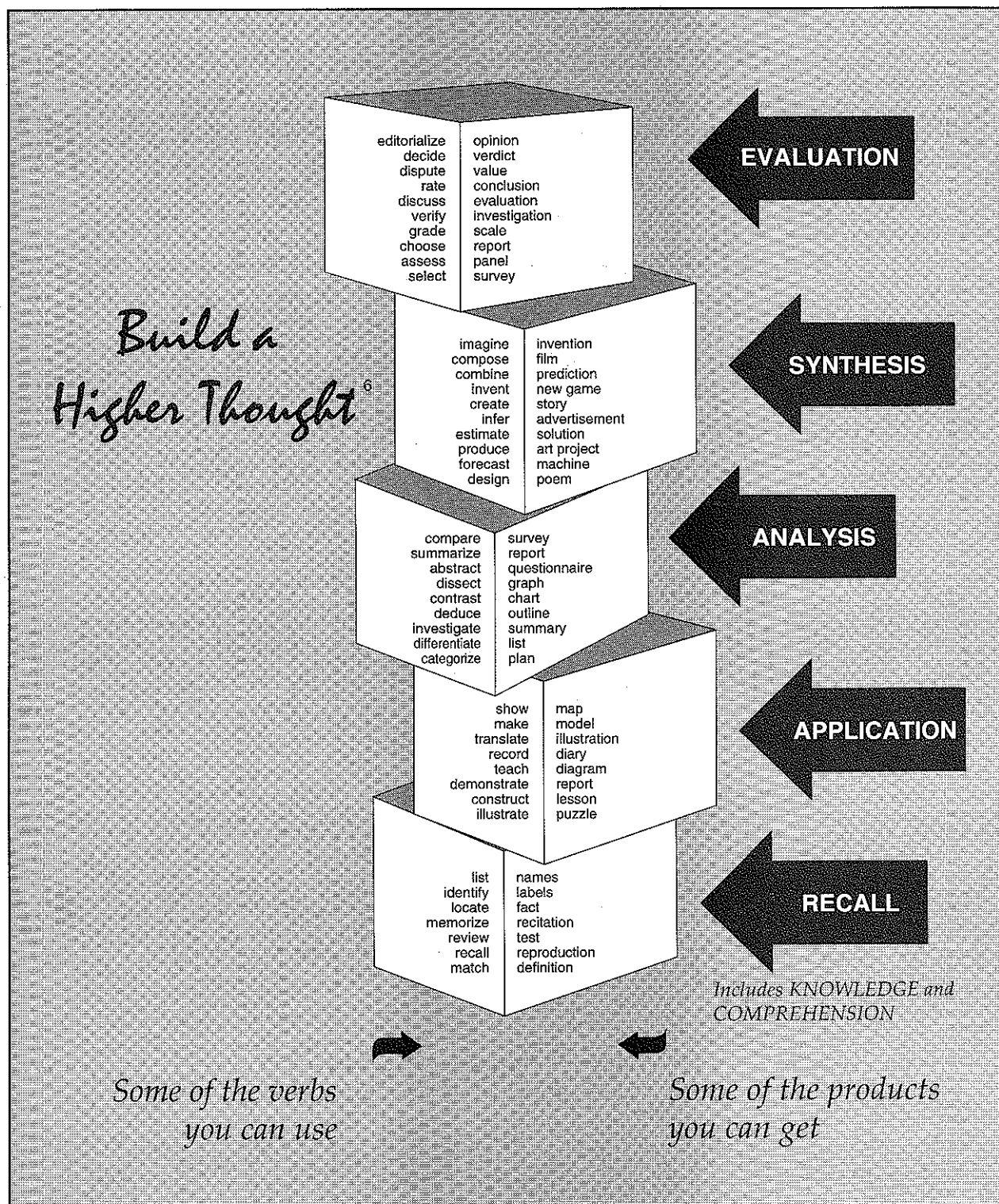
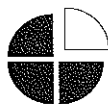


Diagram #4



SIX LEVELS OF INTELLECTUAL PROCESSES

The following levels of thinking can be used to develop objectives or to design activities, questions or learning centers.

Use the web below to select verbs (processes) and nouns (products) when writing objectives at the various levels of thinking. Each piece of the pie represents one thinking level. They are sequenced from 1 to 6 in order of increasing complexity.⁷

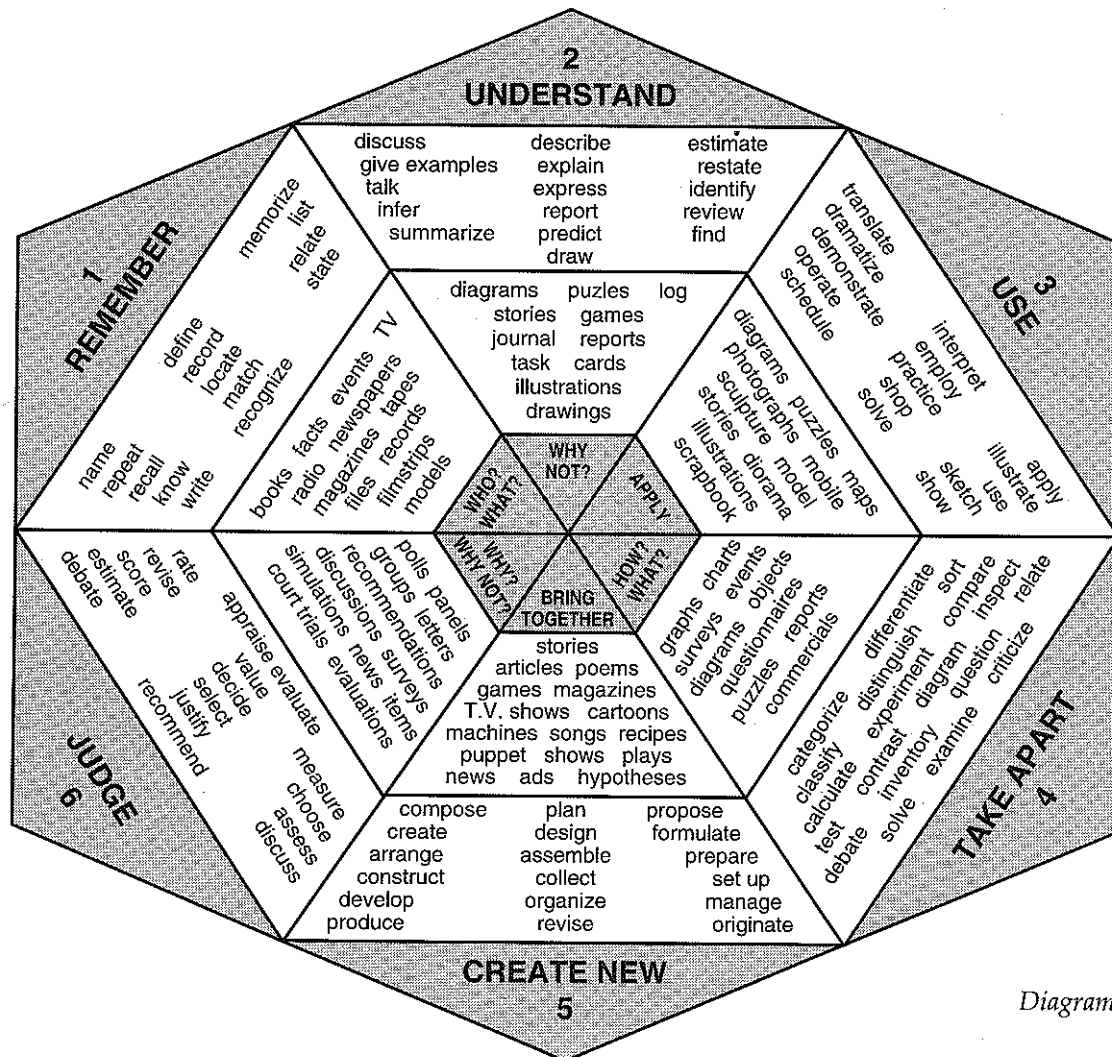


Diagram #5

No discussion of operational curriculum would be complete without some brief word about materials. The resources and materials, the tools of religious education, ought to be "state of the art". A good beginning place is the choice of a recommended series of textbooks selected for their appropriateness in content and approach. However, teaching requires that the learning experience be enhanced through art and music, film, video, posters and banners which set a positive tone for learning. Experiences in art and hands-on activities are not attractive "extras" but rather vital and necessary means to educating today's learner. When incorporated into well-planned lessons, activities which involve the whole person translate into solid learning.

#30

Curriculum planning is an essential ingredient of the school of religion. Without agreement of purpose, approach and outcome, the religious education program operates haphazardly and the school of religion is unable to fulfill its mission.

V. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: PHYSICAL SPACE AND FORMAT

A. LEARNING SPACE

#31

The context where learning takes place often shapes the outcome. Systematic learning occurs in a variety of settings: a school or college classroom, retreat or conference center, home classes and/or church basements to name a few.

#32

But whatever the setting, care must be taken that the atmosphere is welcoming and hospitable. Simple issues such as access to audio/visual equipment, adequate lighting and sufficient space, comfortable seating, and food and drink condition the success of the enterprise. The creation of a religious environment through banners, art, prayer corners, etc., enhance the religious education process. Whether positively or negatively, the physical environment impacts the educational effort. (NCD #189)

B. FORMAT

#33

In their desire to meet the individual needs of learners, those responsible for systematic learning offer a variety in format as well. There is a wide range of approaches from the traditional lecture as a favored means of learning to a hands-on experiential workshop. Adult lecture series, scripture sharing or university courses are some alternative possibilities for adult education. Cooperative learning approaches* enrich the educational experience of learners of all ages. Effective planning takes into account individual differences.

C. A WORD ABOUT METHOD AND PROCESS

#34

The way we "do" religious education in general and systematic learning in particular has changed over the years evolving with new understandings of who we are as humans and what it means to be Catholic. In the years prior to Vatican Council II, education in faith meant primarily the handing down of Truths to the next generation. To know something meant to give assent to these truths expressed as propositions to be believed⁸.

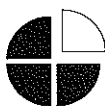
#35

Pre-conciliar thinking reflected the belief that a division existed between the natural world and the supernatural, between the secular world and God's world. Religious education informed the student of supernatural truth which was taught and then applied to human experience. Rote memorization, lecture and the deductive method characterized religious education classes in parishes and schools.

#36

The documents of Vatican Council II indicate the change in how Christians view the world. Indeed, *Gaudium et Spes* proclaims the intimate connection between the church and the world replacing the old supernatural/natural schism with a new world vision. Following the council, the purpose of religious education shifted. A mere assent to truths was replaced by a call to reflect upon these truths and to act upon them to transform the world. To be Christian is thus to be called to conversion, to act on behalf of the gospel⁹. Correct belief is intimately connected to right action. (cf. "Practical Helps," Christian Living Components.)

*Note: Cooperative learning approach: small groups formed within a learning situation, each group consisting of persons possessing a variety of learning styles.



#37

Various contemporary religious education theorists suggest methods reflecting a more inductive approach. This approach begins with human experience and seeks to awaken the learner's interest. It also applies the teaching of scripture and tradition to the issues under study and concludes with some decision or action from the learner. Some prime examples of this methodology follow.

#38

Thomas Groome, drawing from the thinking of Paulo Friere and John Dewey, developed his theory of 'shared Christian praxis'. Groome describes five movements: naming present action, reflecting upon it, making present the teaching of scripture and tradition as it touches upon the present action, asking how the tradition affects the learner's thinking and life, and consequently eliciting a response to the message¹⁰. Each movement is integral to the learning process. Another educator, Rev. Mark Link, S.J. offers a three step process detailing information, formation and transformation. The social analysis process of Rev. Peter Henriot, S.J. creates a "circle of praxis" which identifies existing circumstances, analyzes societal causes, applies theological reflection and finally plans for action to rectify the existing circumstances. (cf. "Christian Formation Handbook" #26-29)

#39

Each approach is rooted in the human experience, applies church teaching to find meaning in this experience and seeks a Christian response in the life of the learner. Msgr. Francis D. Kelly makes the important point that all methodologies need to have a truly ecclesial tone and reflect the ultimate source of the content in Divine Revelation.¹¹ "A correct understanding of experiential learning includes recognition that the entire faith community is an important part of the experience...parents, catechists, and community all have roles..." (NCD #181)

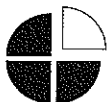
CONCLUSION

#40

To keep in balance all these variables requires attention and grace: attention to detail and data, but grace to keep the touch light and the control respectful of the human person. Through systematic learning Catholic Christians at whatever stage in their journey examine issues of faith and belief. Intentional instruction assists the family in the religious formation of its members. It also provides the church community with people who share a common creed and vocabulary, understand its scriptural foundations and tradition, and express their belief in an identifiable Christian lifestyle.

ENDNOTES

1. Maria Harris, *Teaching and Religious Imagination*, (New York: Harper and Row Publications, Inc., 1987), p. 10.
2. Sandra Jetal Hirstein, *Focus on Living, Teacher Edition*, (Iowa: Brown/ROA Publishing Media, 1990), p. XIV. reprinted with limited permission by publisher.
3. Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*, 2nd. ed., (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985), p. 12.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 48.
6. Used with permission of American Testronics.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Mary C. Boys, *Educating in Faith*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), p. 87.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
10. Thomas Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 224.
11. Francis D. Kelly, *The Mystery We Proclaim*, (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1993), p. 116 ff.



VI. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEARNING AT SELECTED DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS

#41 To help persons responsible for religious education programs apply theory to the learning process for specific age groups, "thumbnail sketches" follow. These sketches describe the implications of systematic learning components at the **PRESCHOOL** (ages 3-5), **PRIMARY** (grades 1-3), **INTERMEDIATE** (grades 4-6), **YOUNG ADOLESCENT** (grades 7-9), **OLDER ADOLESCENT** (grade 10-12) and **ADULT** learning levels.

A. **PRESCHOOL** (ages 3 - 5):

#42 time to foster an enthusiasm and openness for God and God's creation

#43 1. In general, learners at this age:

- are concrete, sensate thinkers who take everything literally
- have short attention spans (5-8 min.)
- focus on the present (have little sense of history or time)
- are naturally curious - like to learn
- have strong memory skills
- have limited verbal and motor skills
- have active imaginations
- may be illogical and inconsistent
- are self-centered and have difficulty sharing
- need to know they are special/important
- may feel and express emotions strongly
- need help in dealing with the unfamiliar
- imitate significant adults
- seek adult approval

#44 2. Appropriate learning activities include:

- varied activities which appeal to all five senses (music, color, etc.)
- physical movement
- simple "hands on" activities which are easy to complete
- alternating periods of activity and quiet time
- story-telling
- frequent repetition of verses, songs and prayers

#45 3. Key considerations for teachers at this level:

- need to understand and like preschool children
- need keen observation skills to compensate for limited verbal skills in children
- need to be comfortable with non-verbal learning activities
- need to use a consistent vocabulary limited to words that children can understand
- questions need to be answered simply and honestly
- preschoolers need a climate of acceptance, affirmation, welcome, comfort and security
- need sensitivity to wide variety of family styles

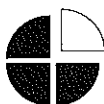
COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#46 **Family**

Children's sense of trust and belonging are strongly influenced by the dynamics of family systems. Foundational God images are based on family experiences. Familiarity with prayer, celebration and tradition rely heavily on family practice. Family is the prime location where the religious attitudes of preschoolers "are caught".

#47 **Parish Community**

The parish community needs to help youngsters feel welcome by inclusion and attention whenever possible. Formative community experiences complement the learning activities of preschool children. Such experiences might include opportunities to bless children, a welcome when they arrive at church, and an occasional gathering (e.g., anniversary of baptism) for special celebrations.



B. PRIMARY (grades 1 - 3):

#48 time to discover capability to learn about God and church

#49

1. In general, learners at this age:

- understand facts better than abstractions
- have short attention spans (10-15 min.)
- live in the present and have a poorly developed sense of time
- are discovering they can make and learn things
- have strong memory skills
- have inadequate language skills to express clearly their beliefs and insights
- are beginning to develop reading and writing skills
- are able to describe and retell (but not analyze) stories
- begin to develop preferred learning styles
- begin to take limited responsibility for themselves
- begin to develop a consistent sense of right and wrong
- are beginning to converse and cooperate in activities
- display uneven development of motor skills
- like to please adults and need affirmation from adults

#50

2. Appropriate learning activities include:

- varied activities with clear ground rules
- learning by doing
- activities which require repetition, recall and a limited degree of application
- stories, narration, drama
- some reading opportunities
- limited use of discussion
- quiet time for reflection and prayer
- appropriate retreat experience
- some group activities
- simple, brief A-V experiences
- field trips
- action songs
- work with partner for brief periods

#51

3. Key considerations for teachers at this level:

- need to understand and like youngsters at this age level
- need good listening skills
- need a wide repertoire of methods to accommodate emerging learning preferences of youngsters
- need to emphasize activities which are sensitive to the developing skills of the youngsters
- need to emphasize that failing at a task is not the same as being a failure as a person - it is part of being a human person
- need to introduce religious concepts in ways that carefully avoid closing off further exploration/inquiry
- need the ability to communicate simple classroom requirements and apply them fairly
- need to affirm honesty and courage
- need to be comfortable with the reality that you are an influential authority figure and are viewed as spokesperson for who God is and what church means

#52

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

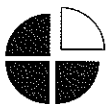
Family

Family modeling of belonging, church affiliation and the importance of religion remains a very strong influence on how children will understand content covered. Family prayer such as grace before meals, bedtime prayer and family participation in liturgy are the chief prayer forms for youngsters. Attitudes about respect for persons, competitiveness, making peace, etc., are first experienced in the family by word and example. Parents need to be provided with thorough information about the content and dynamics of the teaching program to encourage open communication about religious concepts in the home.

#53

Parish Community

The Parish Community takes into account the needs of young children in liturgy and other special parish celebrations and events. Here youngsters find a special place and role in which they may participate. Involvement with elderly prayer partners, parish bazaar activities, celebration of a parish anniversary, etc., are all ways to help children of primary age belong and feel capable.



C. INTERMEDIATE (grades 4 - 6):

time for belonging and contributing

1. In general, learners at this age:

- are becoming logical thinkers, capable of some analysis
- begin to understand simile
- have rapidly developing reading skills
- have increased attention spans
- are developing more adequate concepts of time, space and a sense of history
- like facts
- are beginning to construct general concepts from particular observations
- have more clearly defined learning preferences
- need help to discover their own talents and develop competence
- like teamwork
- desire to belong to and be approved by a group of peers
- are concerned with fairness and begin to challenge rules
- are developing a clearer moral sense but are legalists about concepts such as sin and guilt
- have better physical coordination and are more conscious of their bodies
- have stronger sex-role identification
- have a healthy curiosity about their religious roots

2. Appropriate learning activities include:

- information gathering
- cooperative learning/teamwork/small group activities
- research/notation (e.g., locate chapter and verse in bible)
- memorization after meaning is explored
- open-ended questions to encourage expanding religious concepts
- appropriate retreat experiences
- problem solving and other challenging activities
- some work with graphs, charts and maps for older youngsters
- interpretation of scripture stories
- use of A-V which encourages some analysis or discovery of other conclusions to the lesson

3. Key considerations for teachers at this level:

- teacher needs to understand and like youngsters at this level
- limit expectations - students are just beginning to develop analytic skills
- need to find activities which allow youngsters to demonstrate competence
- need capacity to challenge as well as encourage
- need a varied repertoire of teaching techniques to engage individuals with differing learning preferences
- need to provide security without smothering initiative
- need to reinforce the virtue of trust
- need to provide clear rules and model fairness
- need to summarize discussions clearly without closing off the possibility of further insights into a given topic

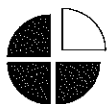
COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

Family

Modeling within family is still very important. Since youngsters are able to question concepts, families need to talk with each other about religious topics. The school of religion provides information for family communication. Youngsters are becoming more attracted to peer approval but continue to need the understanding and approval of parents.

Parish Community

There is a need for parish community to provide some experiences of belonging and celebrating together. To the extent possible, involvement of youngsters in these parish events is desirable. The concept that they can help others becomes increasingly important to youngsters at this age. In addition to the witness of the community, opportunities for youngsters themselves to participate in outreach activities is vital.



D. **YOUNG ADOLESCENT** (grades 7 - 8 - [9]):

- #60 a time of transition toward more adequate understanding of themselves and what they know and believe
- #61 1. **In general, learners at this age:**
- are undergoing a marked period of physical, mental and emotional growth
 - are becoming capable of forming concepts and thinking in the abstract
 - can think chronologically
 - have a good sense of history
 - need intellectual challenges to discover their new abilities
 - think primarily about the present
 - search for a unique self-image
 - are rapidly developing in sexual awareness
 - tend to have close friendships with a select few
 - have a strong need to belong, therefore their peer group is growing in importance and peer pressure is at its height at this age
 - need to be needed • seek to be sincere with peers
 - experience a strong need for a firm home base
 - tend to be self-conscious
 - need to clarify right and wrong • question authority
 - have a strong sense of social justice but are so self-absorbed that it is difficult for them to live up to adult expectations such as selfless love for neighbor
- #62 2. **Appropriate learning activities include:**
- Scripture - using the bible as text, and study of key themes
 - explore and experiment with concepts
 - brainstorming and open discussion
 - group work with clear tasks, accountability and time limits
 - audio-visuals which encourage analysis and reflection
 - appropriate retreat experiences
 - some creative writing with needed direction
 - building a more precise vocabulary of the words used by the worshipping community
 - music • maps, charts, diagrams • creative art projects • field trips
 - some service projects / social justice issues
 - learning games • drama • simulation • physical activity
- #63 3. **Key considerations for teachers at this level:**
- teacher needs to understand and like young persons at this level
 - need to challenge the students to discover their analytical skills
 - need to vary activities to accommodate differing learning preferences
 - need to be comfortable with the need of young people to question religious understanding
 - need to develop the capacity to ask clear questions
 - need to include historical information in presentations
 - need to be honest, fair and consistent in dealing with students
 - need to provide clear, precise directions for learning activities
 - need to make rules and regulations that provide security, make sense and can be reasonably explained
 - need the capacity to accept negativity and opposition as characteristics of a phase which will be outgrown
 - need to be positive adult models for the young adolescent by showing one's own commitment in the face of ambiguity and doubt
 - need to provide strong affirmation for individuals within the context of fair "ground rules" for group behavior/performance

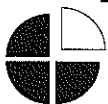
COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

Family

In spite of the very strong influences of peers, young adolescents still look to parents as the dominant influence in their lives. It is a difficult but necessary task for families to maintain meaningful communication with youngsters. Family participation in appropriate activities and projects is desirable, (e.g., workshops which deal with communication skills, psychological development of adolescents).

Parish Community

The parish community can find significant ways to incorporate young adolescents into the community through service activities, social groups and worship services. It is essential to provide a variety of ways for young people to feel important and accepted at this stage. Anything the parish can do to strengthen family units at this time will have a positive impact on young adolescents.



E. OLDER ADOLESCENT (grades [9] 10 - 12):

time to develop an understanding of God and the meaning of life and faith for oneself

1. In general, learners at this age:

- are comfortable dealing with abstract ideas
- are learning the skills of critical reflection
- have the ability to synthesize as well as analyze
- are beginning to expand their perspective beyond family and peer group to the world
- are becoming more objective • are becoming more stable emotionally
- can empathize and see issues from the perspective of others
- have definite preferences for learning styles
- experience feelings of insecurity as they engage in new modes of thinking and develop new perspectives
- are establishing clear personal identities
- develop lasting friendships with members of both sexes
- are engaged in making decisions about career choices
- are beginning to develop an internalized morality as a pattern for living
- are able to exercise moral judgments in matters of greater complexity
- have an emerging capacity for adult spiritual insight

2. Appropriate learning activities include:

- brainstorming, reflection, evaluation and application
- case study analysis and solutions
- discussion groups with summary and follow-up
- creative writing • journal-keeping • interviews
- field trips followed by interpretation and evaluation
- research and reporting
- guest lectures • role play or simulation games • bible encounters
- audio visuals with reflections
- rock music analysis
- exploring and addressing social justice issues
- appropriate retreat experiences

3. Key considerations for teachers at this level:

- need to understand and like older adolescents
- need to present issues of faith in ways that are attractive to thinking persons
- need to be comfortable responding to questions about religious matters
- need to help youth critique their thinking rather than censure youth
- need to help youth critique their culture and its many expressions in music, video, clothing, etc.
- need to provide educational activities which allow young persons to analyze situations, look for new sources of information and make judgments based on evidence
- need to let older adolescents have specific input into their learning activities
- need to present a consistent value system
- need to avoid moral clichés, lectures and "because it is law" response to moral behavior
- need to help youth understand that freedom is not an absolute and that their rights and desires are limited by God's will and the rights of others.
- need to support the search for a meaningful personal identity
- need to be comfortable with a variety of learning experiences
- need to be a credible model of discipleship
- need to relate the gospel message in language and images which are understandable to youth without diluting one's adult faith stance

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

Family

Older adolescents still need a strong home base in order to move out into the world with confidence. They require family guidance in making career decisions. Families need courage to let adolescents make decisions of significance. Good communication remains crucial to all members of the household. Some family participation in intergenerational programs may be helpful at this time.

Parish Community

The parish community needs to provide for the participation of older adolescents as emerging adults in all aspects of parish life. Training for social, liturgical and outreach ministries should be provided for interested persons. Active sponsorship into ministry within and beyond the parish is the link which makes the church credible as a community of Christ's disciples.

F. ADULT

#72

"center of the Church's educational mission" (TTJD #43)

#73

1. In general, adult learners:

- have a broad base of personal experience
- represent a wide range of ages, life styles, and educational backgrounds
- know themselves better — both strengths and limitations
- have definite preferences or prejudices about participation in structured learning
- are capable of synthesis as well as analysis
- frequently have to make decisions about complex moral problems which impact the lives of other persons for whom they are responsible
- are concerned about the significance/meaning of their lives
- have multiple responsibilities (self, family, friends, work, local civic community, parish, etc.) with corresponding demands on their time
- may spend a major portion of their time earning a living
- may be churched or unchurched
- have a need to belong to a faith community
- may be at diverse stages of faith development
- are capable of evaluating learning experiences

#74

2. Appropriate learning activities include:

- book discussion club
- lectures
- workshops
- seminars
- reflection
- media
- retreats
- social/cultural activities
- critical analysis of socio-cultural influences in the light of the gospel message

#75

3. Key considerations for teachers at this level:

- need to respect adults in varied life situations
- need to be facilitators of learning
- need to respect experience of learners
- need to be resourceful in order to refer self-directed learners to appropriate learning materials/activities/events
- lecturers need to be skilled in areas which they present
- workshop facilitators need to develop skills in communication and group dynamics
- need to be familiar with a wide variety of learning resources

#76

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

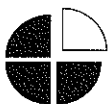
Family

There is a strong interplay of learning between the family life and the professional life of adults. Family is frequently the forum where people can search for meaning in a safe environment. Adults become more conscious that family is the place where people do their living, loving, doubting, quarreling, worrying, rejoicing. Adults can consciously contribute to the function or dysfunction of the family unit. A functional family helps adults grow in the ability to bring faith questions into other arenas of life.

#77

Parish Community

Parish has an important role to play as advocate for learning. Workshops, parish libraries, social groups within the parish contribute to the development of well informed Catholic Christians. Training for ministry within the parish provides the opportunity for meaningful witness by committed adults. Parish community, by proclaiming and living the gospel message, strengthens and challenges adults to live their professional and social lives according to gospel values.



VII. INTENDED CURRICULUM: FOUNDATION/ FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMATIC LEARNING

#78 The descriptions of the previous section have provided some insight into the persons and processes characteristic of lifelong learning. This final section will address the need to insure that the basic truths of our faith are introduced and developed in a comprehensive and coherent manner.

A. CURRICULUM OUTLINES AND TEXTBOOKS

#79 **The attached curriculum outlines do not replace the use of a recommended textbook series.** The outlines DO summarize the minimum content which should be taught to persons enrolled in programs using approved teaching materials at the end of specific time periods (e.g., 3rd grade, 6th grade, etc.)

#80 According to the National Catechetical Directory, one of the responsibilities of a diocesan office of religious education is the "recommendation of catechetical curricula and textbooks". (NCD #218b)

#81 texts must present the authentic and complete message of Christ and His Church, adapted to the capacity of the learner ...textbooks must avoid racism, sexism, and narrow provincialism of all kinds...they should provide for variety in worship and service. (NCD #264)

#82 **It is policy in this diocese that only texts and materials recommended by the diocesan Office of Religious Education be used in the religious education programs of the parishes and schools within the diocese of Worcester.** In recommending and evaluating texts and supplementary teaching materials, the office uses criteria from the NCD, from *Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Current listings of approved texts are made available through diocesan resource centers.

#83 To insure comprehensive religious education programs, we advocate:

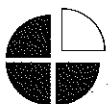
1. consistent use of one recommended textbook series for grades 1 through 6
2. continued use of the same recommended textbook series for young adolescents [Grades 7-8-(9)]

OR

use of recommended materials (e.g., young adolescent faith themes) which complete the scope and sequence structure of the textbook series used in the primary and intermediate grades. (Specific suggestions for thematic development are contained in the curriculum chart for young adolescents.)

- #84 3. a sequenced thematic development for older adolescents [grades (9)-10-11-12] which complements the curriculum development maintained throughout the prior program. (Specific suggestions for thematic development are included in the curriculum chart for older adolescents.)

#85 TO INSURE ADEQUATE COVERAGE OF THE CONTENT INCLUDED IN RECOMMENDED TEACHING MATERIALS, THIS OFFICE RECOMMENDS THAT PARISH PROGRAM SCHEDULES INCLUDE A MINIMUM OF 30 LEARNING HOURS PER YEAR. This policy recommendation is made for the purpose of doing justice to the content. The number, frequency and length of the individual sessions needed to comply with the 30 learning hour requirement is to be determined at the local level and may vary from parish to parish.



B. EXPLANATION OF THE CURRICULUM OUTLINES

- #86 1. Outlines do not reflect some content which is specific to candidates for sacramental preparation. The companion "Christian Formation Handbook" Appendix A, covers this material.
- #87 2. As indicated above, the outlines summarize minimum content covered at the end of specific time intervals. Some textbook series cover content additional to that listed on the outlines.
- #88 3. The outlines are **CUMULATIVE**. Content, vocabulary, and prayer are listed only at the time they are introduced and explained to learners.
- #89 4. Definitions of terms in the vocabulary listing will be found in student texts and teacher manuals of recommended series.
- #90 5. The outlines were compiled in response to concerns about apparent variations in program from parish to parish. While it is true that each approved textbook series does not cover exactly the same material at each grade level, it is also true that systematic and careful use of approved teaching materials will insure that the core content is taught.

C. EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES:

Key Concepts in Curriculum:

statements written in age appropriate language summarizing minimum content. Key concepts are not so much statements to be memorized as they are foundational ideas to be explored and understood.

Learning Objectives:

suggested ways for learners to demonstrate that they know/understand key concepts.

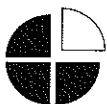
Vocabulary:

words to be introduced and explained to learners. Teachers on all levels need to review and expand definitions of vocabulary on lower levels.

Prayers to be learned:

the listing reflects a minimum expectation of prayers that will be committed to memory by all students enrolled in the systematic learning program. Additional prayers will be introduced and shared during learning sessions. However, the amount of repetition necessary for memorization of additional prayers cannot be guaranteed during systematic learning sessions.

Memorization of prayers will require reinforcement at home and regular participation in community worship.



KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

words but we try to find the best words we can to talk about God. I as Son, God as Holy Spirit.

about God.

and loved their neighbor. (e.g., St. Joseph)
Jesus, God's gift to us.
new life (or from the dead).

peace with each other.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

VOCABULARY:

- BIBLE
- CHRISTMAS
- CHURCH
- CREATION
- EASTER
- FATHER
- GOD
- HOLY SPIRIT
- MARY
- PEOPLE OF GOD
- JESUS
- SAINTS
- CHRISTIAN
- PRAYER

SIGN OF THE CROSS
AMEN
SIGN OF PEACE

It is recommended that traditional prayers and biblical passages be committed to memory.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion children will be able to:

GOD:

- tell a story in their own words about:
God as loving Father
God as Son
God as Holy Spirit
- explain in own words what we mean when we say God made all things
- name three ways in which Jesus shows us he is our friend

BIBLE:

- explain in own words why the Bible is a holy book

CHURCH:

- draw a picture of the people of God
- draw a picture of the house for God's people

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- participate in prayer with others
- draw a picture of a person praying and listening for God

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

- describe in own words:
why we celebrate Christmas
why we celebrate Easter
- name the mother of Jesus
- explain in own words how saints are holy people

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- illustrate through art/song/drama/storytelling how each person is unique & 1

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- demonstrate in action the ability to make peace with another person
- tell us how they take care of part(s) of God's world (plants, pets, people)
- tell someone they are sorry

PRIMARY (Grades 1-3)

KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

GOD:

God created all things out of love.

The word GOD includes: loving Father who created us/Jesus, God's Son, who became a human person/Holy Spirit who helps us to be holy.

We use the word Trinity to describe God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God has no limits of time and space; God always was and always will be; God is everywhere.

Jesus is God who became a human (Incarnation).

Jesus was born and grew up in a human family.

Jesus taught us about God: that God loves us always; that God forgives us when we are sorry; that God asks us to love and serve all people.

Jesus taught us how to live by what he said and what he did.

Jesus called apostles to spread the Good News.

Jesus died and was raised to new life.

Crucifixion means the death of Jesus on the cross.

The Resurrection means the raising of Jesus to new life.

The Ascension means the return of Jesus to the Father.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us always (Pentecost).

The Holy Spirit helps guide us to make the right choices and do the right things.

BIBLE:

The Bible teaches us about God and God's love for us.

The Bible contains two major sections:

a. Old Testament: the faith story of God's People before Jesus' birth.

b. New Testament: the faith story of Jesus and the early church.

Sometimes the Bible is referred to as Scripture.

In the Bible angels are God's messengers.

God is present to us in a special way when Scripture is read.

The Gospel is the Good News of Jesus risen from the dead.

CHURCH:

The church is the community of believers we name the People of God.

Church is a group of people who share the same beliefs and sacraments.

The church building is a sacred space where the People of God gather to worship.

The church building is a sacred space containing: sanctuary, altar, tabernacle, baptismal font, sacristy.

The church helps us to remember the stories of our faith, to live our belief and to celebrate our faith with others.

We become members of the church at baptism.

We can experience the church in our local parish.

Jesus promised his continuing presence in the church through the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:16-20)

Christians are followers of Jesus.

PRAYER/WORSHIP:

Prayer is talking and listening to God.

We pray for many reasons: to thank God, to ask God's help, to say "I'm sorry", to praise God.

Sometimes we pray in words, in song or in silence.

We can pray by ourselves, with our friends, family or parish family.

Credo are a list of things that Christians believe.

Liturgy is a word we use to describe our public prayer to God.

A sacrament is a sign and celebration of the love of Christ and the faith of his people.

In baptism we receive God's grace: a share in God's life which helps us to live as Jesus taught us to live.

Eucharist is the central celebration of the church.

Eucharist is the sacrament through which we are nourished by Jesus and become fuller members of the community.

The Mass includes the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist.

Jesus promised to be with us always in a special way in the eucharist.

In the sacrament of penance we express sorrow for our sins and celebrate God's forgiveness.

The Lord's Prayer is a special prayer Jesus taught us.

The Hail Mary is a prayer written by the church to honor Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The Sign of the Cross reminds us that Christians believe in the Trinity.

SPECIAL SEASONS AND PEOPLE:

Advent is a time for waiting and preparing for Christmas.

Christmas is the time we celebrate that God became a human person. (Incarnation)

Lent is a time of preparation for Easter.

Holy Week is a time we think and pray about the suffering and death of Jesus.

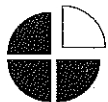
Easter is the feast on which we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Ascension is the feast on which we celebrate the return of Jesus to the Father.

Pentecost is the feast on which we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Mary is the mother of Jesus and a person who trusted God her entire life.

Saints are people who love God very much and show this love in acts of caring and sharing.



FAITH / IDENTITY:

All people are children of God: good, unique, lovable and deserving of respect.

All people are made in the image and likeness of God.

Humans are the greatest of God's creatures and are responsible for taking care of God's creation.

God intended that each person know, love and serve God in this world and be happy forever with God in heaven.

God gave each person special gifts and talents to share with all people.

We show our love for God by caring for one another.

Faith is believing that God loves us and is always with us.

A vocation is an invitation to serve others in a particular way.

People are called to serve others as: deacons, priests, bishops, religious brothers and sisters, married persons, single persons.

JUSTICE/MORALITY:

Jesus taught us to live the law of love: "Love one another as I have loved you." (Jn. 13:34-35)

Jesus taught us the Great Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:37-38)

The commandments show us ways to love others and help us to live with others.

Grace is the gift of God's life which helps us live as Jesus taught us to live.

God wants us to enjoy all of creation and use creation to praise God and for the good of all.

Sin is choosing not to live the Great Commandment.

We need to say we are sorry to God and to anyone whom we have hurt.

God asks us to forgive others.

God never stops loving us, even when some of our actions do not follow the law of love.

Jesus taught us to try to help people who are suffering or hurt.

Our human differences are our special gifts from God and are to be appreciated and respected.

PRAYERS TO BE LEARNED

SIGN OF THE CROSS
OUR FATHER

HAIL MARY
GLORY BE

AN ACT OF CONTRITION

It is recommended that traditional prayers and selected biblical passages, particularly psalms, be committed to memory.

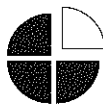
IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

VOCABULARY:

ADVENT
ALTAR
ANGELS
APOSTLE
ASCENSION
BAPTISM
BAPTISMAL FONT
BIBLE
BISHOP
CHRIST
CHRISTIAN
CHRISTMAS
CHURCH
COMMANDMENTS
COMMUNITY
CREATION
CREATOR
CREED
CRUCIFIXION
DEACON
DIOCESE
EASTER
EUCCHARIST
FAITH
FORGIVE

GOD
GOSPEL
GOOD NEWS
GRACE
GREAT COMMANDMENT
HEAVEN
HELL
HOLY COMMUNION
HOLY SPIRIT
HOLY WEEK
HUMAN
JESUS
LAW OF LOVE
LAY MAN
LAY WOMAN
LAST SUPPER
LECTIONARY
LENT
LITURGY
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST
LITURGY OF THE WORD
LORD'S PRAYER
MARY
MASS

NEW TESTAMENT
PARISH
PASTOR
PEOPLE OF GOD
PENANCE
PENTECOST
POPE
PRAYER
PRIEST
RELIGIOUS BROTHER
RELIGIOUS SISTER
RESURRECTION
SACRAMENT
SACRAMENTARY
SACRED SPACE
SACRISTY/VESTING ROOM
SAINT
SANCTUARY
SCRIPTURE
SIN
SON OF GOD
TABERNACLE
TRINITY
VOCAION
WORSHIP



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion children will be able to:

GOD:

- express in art the beauty of God's creation
- talk imaginatively about God, showing that limited words cannot fully express/explain God
- express in own words an understanding of what we mean by the Trinity, "three persons in one God"
- describe in own words who Jesus is for Christians
- demonstrate an understanding that Jesus was a human person
- describe in own words three ways Jesus talks to us about God
- name two ways that Jesus taught
- define APOSTLE in own words

BIBLE:

- name the two major divisions of the Bible and the general purpose of each
- demonstrate understanding of why the Bible is a holy book to Jews and Christians
- explain in own words the role of angels in the Bible
- report the Good News of the Gospel

CHURCH:

- recite from memory the taught definition of CHURCH
- define in own words COMMUNITY
- name three communities they belong to (home, school, neighborhood, parish) and
- describe 2 ways in which:
 - they serve each community
 - members of each community serve each other
- name their parish church and identify certain items and places within their church
- explain how CHURCH is both community and building

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- demonstrate in action: prayer in words, song and silence
- name 4 of the reasons we pray
- experience praying in a variety of settings: alone, with family, friends, classmates, parish community
- identify, using media, the parts of the Mass:
 - Liturgy of the Word
 - Liturgy of the Eucharist
- define in own words meaning of SACRAMENT
- explain in own words the sacraments of BAPTISM, EUCHARIST, PENANCE
- relate a meaning for GRACE
- explain in own words the difference between ordinary bread and wine and eucharist
- be able to recite from memory: THE LORD'S PRAYER
THE HAIL MARY
- be able to make the SIGN OF CROSS
- explain in own words the meaning of the word CREED

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

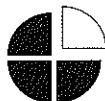
- explain in own words or through art or drama the meaning of ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, LENT, EASTER
- define in own words, with help of media: CRUCIFIXION, RESURRECTION, ASCENSION
- act out the events of PENTECOST and give an example of how the Holy Spirit changed the lives of the apostles
- draw a picture illustrating the major feasts of the church
- describe in own words how Mary said "Yes" to God
- name a favorite saint and tell something about his/her life

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- recite from memory why God made them
- explain in own words or through art or drama why each human person has value
- define VOCATION and identify in word or picture the ministries of pope, bishop, priest, deacon, religious sister/brother
- explain what faith in God means

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- recite from memory the great commandment (Matt. 22:37-38)
- recite from memory Jesus' one commandment (Jn. 13:34-35)
- define SIN in own words and give examples of how we sin
- identify their special God-given gifts to help others



INTERMEDIATE (Grades 4-6)

KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

GOD:

We use the word Trinity to describe God as creator, redeemer, sanctifier.

Human persons are created in God's image.

Revelation is the unfolding of the mystery of God and God's plan for salvation.

God is revealed most fully to us in the person of Jesus.

Grace is God's gift of life and love.

Jesus is God with us. (Emmanuel)

Jesus is the savior promised in the Old Testament, who died to save us, rose from the dead and is with us today.

Jesus used parables to teach us about the kingdom of God.

We use the term paschal mystery to refer to the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Holy Spirit is God's life among us symbolized in wind, fire and dove.

BIBLE:

The Bible is God's word to us recorded in the inspired words of the human persons who wrote it.

The Bible reveals a personal God who is involved in the history of a people.

Exodus is the focal event of the Old Testament.

Covenant, a major theme of the Old Testament, refers to a loving and faithful relationship between God and God's people.

The Bible is a collection/library of books:

- Old Testament - 45 books of history, law, poetry, song

- New Testament - 27 books: 4 gospels, 21 epistles, Acts of the Apostles, Book of Revelation

The Old Testament tells the stories of our ancestors in faith called by God to lead and teach God's people, including Abraham, Sarah, Moses and David.

Prophets such as Isaiah, Amos and Jeremiah are persons called by God to speak the truth to God's people.

CHURCH:

The church continues the life and work of Jesus.

The Catholic Church is a community of people who share the same faith and sacraments and are united in the Holy Spirit under the leadership of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, and of the bishops.

The church as community celebrates the presence and action of Christ in our lives through sacraments.

The church is called to become a community of disciples.

As church, we all have the mission of witnessing, worshipping, building community and serving others.

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

There are many styles of prayer within the Catholic tradition: formal prayer, spontaneous prayer, meditation.

We as church pass on our experience of God from generation to generation through creeds.

Sacraments are signs of God's continuing presence (grace) in our lives.

Sacraments are communal celebrations of the Christian community.

We celebrate seven sacraments in the Catholic Church.

Each sacrament has primary signs and symbols.

Sacraments of initiation are baptism, confirmation and eucharist.

Sacraments of healing are penance and anointing of the sick.

Sacraments in service of communion are matrimony and holy orders.

Eucharist is the central celebration of our faith.

Eucharist is a sacrificial meal celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus. (paschal mystery)

In the sacrament of penance we express sorrow for our sins, celebrate reconciliation with the community and celebrate God's forgiveness.

The Order of Christian Funerals expresses our Christian belief in new life after death.

SPECIAL SEASONS AND PEOPLE:

The liturgical year is the cycle of feasts and seasons that Catholic Christians celebrate: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time.

Advent is the four weeks the church sets aside to prepare for Christmas.

Christmas season includes the Nativity, the feast of the Holy Family, Mary Mother of God, the Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord.

Lent is the forty days (from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday) which the Church sets aside to prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery of Jesus.

The Easter season includes the Triduum, Ascension and Pentecost.

The Triduum is the three day period from Holy Thursday sundown to Easter Sunday sundown.

Easter is the central feast of the Catholic Church.

Holy Days are days on which we celebrate special events and people in the life of the church.

Because Mary is the mother of Jesus, she is the mother of God. Mary is called the Mother of the Church.

Saints are holy men and women who live gospel values to a heroic degree.

Communion of saints means that we share the blessings of all the saints, God's holy people, living and dead.

FAITH / IDENTITY:

God created me out of love and my life has purpose.

We can always believe and trust God.

Faith is a gift from God.

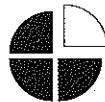
The virtue of faith helps us make good choices to live as followers of Jesus.

Human faith is a response we make to people because we have experienced they are worthy of our trust.

Each baptized person has a call from God to live a Christian life.

Traditional Christian lifestyles include: lay ministry, marriage, ordained ministry, single life and vowed religious life.

Death marks the physical end of the human life cycle and Christians believe in new life after death.



JUSTICE / MORALITY:

Morality is the way we put our beliefs into practice.

The ten commandments are a sign of the covenant between God and God's people in the Old Testament, and are moral guides for our lives together.

Beatitudes and the teachings of Jesus are moral guides for Jesus' followers, which teach us to work for justice and peace.

Jesus teaches us that love of God and love of neighbor cannot be separated.

The final commandment which Jesus left to his followers is: "Love one another as I have loved you".

Persons need to love themselves in order to love God and other persons.

Prejudice (deciding not to like people before you ever meet them) prevents us from living the way Jesus taught us to live.

Jesus calls us to develop our gifts and talents to the best of our ability.

We are called to care for and use God's creation properly.

God did not create evil; sin and misery are the results of original sin - the choice to turn away from God's love.

Each person is free to choose how to respond to God.

Conscience is the ability we develop, with guidance, to judge whether something is right or wrong.

Christians are called to balance freedom and responsibility.

We sin when we -

1. know something is against God's law,
2. think about the matter, and
3. freely choose to do what we know is wrong.

Our sins disrupt our relationship with others and with God.

Mistakes, even serious mistakes, are not sins.

The power of God's love is greater than the power of sin.

Christians are responsible for their actions and their inactions.

We need to learn to express our feelings through actions that do not hurt ourselves or others.

PRAYERS TO BE LEARNED

AN ACT OF CONTRITION

APOSTLES' CREED

It is recommended that traditional prayers and selected biblical passages, particularly psalms, be committed to memory.

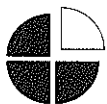
IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

VOCABULARY:

ABRAHAM
ABSOLUTION
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
AMOS
ANOINTING OF THE SICK
APOSTLES' CREED
ASH WEDNESDAY
BEATITUDES
BISHOP OF ROME
BOOK OF REVELATION
CATHOLIC
CHRISTMAS SEASON
COMMUNION OF SAINTS
CONFIRMATION
CONSCIENCE
CONTRITION
COVENANT
DAVID
DISCIPLE
EASTER SEASON
EMMANUEL
EPIPHANY
EPISTLE
EXODUS

GENESIS
HOLY DAYS
HOLY ORDERS
HOLY THURSDAY
HUMAN FAITH
INCARNATION
INSPIRED WORD
ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
JESUS CHRIST
KINGDOM OF GOD
LAY MINISTER
LITURGICAL YEAR
MATRIMONY
MEDITATION
MORALITY
MOSES
MYSTERY
NATIVITY
ORDINARY TIME
ORIGINAL SIN
PARABLES
PASCHAL MYSTERY
PASSOVER

PREJUDICE
PROPHET
PSALMS
RECONCILIATION
REDEEMER
REVELATION
ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERAL
R.C.I.A.
SACRAMENTS IN SERVICE OF
COMMUNION
SACRAMENTS OF HEALING
SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION
SACRIFICE
SALVATION
SANCTIFIER
SARAH
SAVIOR
SIGN
SYMBOL
TEN COMMANDMENTS
TRIDUUM
VIRTUES OF FAITH/HOPE/LOVE
VOWED LIFE
WITNESS
WORD OF GOD
YAHWEH



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion youngsters will be able to:

GOD:

- describe God as Trinity: one God in three persons; God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Spirit/Sanctifier
- describe how Jesus was the Savior promised by God in the Old Testament
- describe what we mean by grace
- with the help of media narrate the key events in the life of Jesus
- using examples from three parables of Jesus describe the kingdom of God
- describe what we mean by paschal mystery
- name and explain three symbols for the Holy Spirit

BIBLE:

- describe how the Bible is an inspired collection of books
- define COVENANT and apply the definition to events of God's people in the Old Testament and the New Testament
- list the number of books of the Old Testament
- list the number of books of the New Testament
- identify in own words Abraham, Sarah, Moses, and David and explain why each is important in the story of God's people
- locate a scripture passage using biblical notation (chapter and verse)
- communicate by means of a story, poem, warning or symbolic action God's message of justice and mercy as experienced by two prophets.

CHURCH:

- explain verbally or in writing 3 ways in which the church functions as a community
- recite from memory the (expanded) taught definition of church

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- recite the Apostles' Creed and explain your understanding of this creed
- define SACRAMENT
- name and explain the special purpose of each of the seven sacraments
- identify the signs connected with each sacrament
- describe from pictures the ways in which each sacrament is celebrated
- demonstrate an understanding of the process of going to confession
- name the 3 sacraments of initiation
- name the 2 sacraments of healing
- name the 2 sacraments in service of communion
- describe the events the church recalls during the Triduum

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

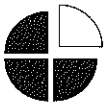
- name in order the 5 major seasons of the liturgical year
- describe 3 major feasts of the church
- identify saints and explain their importance in the life of the church
- describe the central role of Mary in the life of the church
- explain what Christians mean by the term COMMUNION OF SAINTS
- give three reasons why we honor saints
- define in own words, with help of media: INCARNATION

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- create a personal definition of religious faith
- name major vocations described by church
- explain why Christians believe in life everlasting

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- recite from memory: Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-38) and Law of Love (Jn. 13:34-35)
- recite from memory Ten Commandments and apply message of each to life situations
- explain in own words what Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 12:12-31 about community.
- recite from memory the Beatitudes and explain their meaning for Christian life
- explain in own words understanding of the word PREJUDICE
- explain why guidance is needed to help form a person's conscience
- identify three conditions necessary for humans to sin seriously
- explain the difference between mistakes and sins
- name 3 ways Christians live based on the values taught by Jesus
- name/demonstrate a special talent that God gave them to help make the world a better place



YOUNG ADOLESCENT (GRADES 7-9)

KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

GOD:

God is so full of life and love that God is greater than any single image.

God has no limits of time and space. (Infinite)

God is both within our hearts (Immanence) and beyond our physical, sensory experience. (Transcendence)

The Mystery of the Trinity: God is Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier and yet one God in three persons.

The relationship between Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier is a mystery to be explored, not solved.

God reveals God's presence in the events of our lives.

Jesus reveals who God is and who we are called to be. In Jesus, God shares divine life with us.

Jesus, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, is both fully divine and fully human.

Jesus is like us in all things but sin. Jesus, like all human persons, grew in age, wisdom and grace.

We understand Jesus through his life and teachings.

The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, ever present, guides and strengthens the church.

BIBLE:

Major themes of the Old and New Testaments include covenant, forgiveness, justice, prayer, service, and the coming of the kingdom.

The call to live just and peaceful lives is central to the gospel message.

We need to understand the significance of the Gospel in our lives.

The writers of the gospels are called evangelists.

Each evangelist writes the same basic message from a different viewpoint, to a different audience and for a different reason.

The synoptic gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke are similar in content and structure.

The Holy Spirit provided inspiration and guidance throughout the development of the scriptures.

CHURCH:

The Catholic Church [a community of people who share the same faith and sacraments, are united in the Holy Spirit under the leadership of the Pope and the other bishops] is called to be God's presence in the world.

Catholic Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. (Marks of the Church.)

The church as herald proclaims the Gospel of Jesus and its call to prepare for the coming of the kingdom among all people of the world.

The pilgrim church, throughout its rich history, has grown and changed developing the Tradition under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The church looks to find new understandings and better ways to live out the message of Jesus.

The church includes sinners and saints.

PRAYER/WORSHIP:

Our image of God influences our experience of prayer.

We express our common beliefs through statements known as creeds. e.g. the two most common are Apostles' and Nicene. Sacraments are public celebrations needed by the church to reaffirm the church's mission in the world.

Real presence is a term used to refer to the sacramental presence of Christ in the eucharist.

The church welcomes new members through the process of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Catechumens prepare for the sacraments of initiation during the catechumenate period of R.C.I.A.

Mystagogy is the period of postbaptismal catechesis.

The sacrament of penance is a celebration of conversion and healing expressing a need to forgive and be forgiven.

Marriage and orders are sacraments of vocation which celebrate adult commitment and service.

SPECIAL SEASONS AND PEOPLE:

The church has a liturgical calendar of seasons which begins with the first Sunday of Advent.

Advent is the four weeks preparing to celebrate the birth of the Messiah and the second coming.

Christmas season begins with the Nativity and ends with the Baptism of Jesus.

Lent is a time to repent and change our hearts through prayer and works of mercy.

Lent is a time of intense preparation for RCIA candidates.

Holy Week recalls the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Some Marian feasts are: Immaculate Conception; Mary, Mother of God; Annunciation and Assumption.

Saints are historical and contemporary people who live gospel values. Canonized saints are holy men and women of faith who responded to the call of God and witnessed to the presence of God at significant times in history.

FAITH/IDENTITY:

Faith is a free response to God's revelation expressed in words and in deeds.

Faith tells us that we share in Christ's victory over death and will rise again to live forever.

Faith is an ongoing process of conversion.

Times of doubt and times of certainty are natural parts of the life of faith.

Religion refers to the ways in which people publicly express and share their understanding of God and their faith in God.

Jesus shows us how to live in harmony with the Creator, the universe, others and ourselves.

Discipleship is a personal response to develop a relationship with Jesus.

Service to others is an essential element in becoming a disciple of Christ.

Learning to think independently is a necessary step towards adulthood.

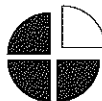
Mature persons take responsibility for their actions.

Physical, psycho-social and sexual maturation are a normal part of adolescence.

People mature physically, intellectually, psychologically and sexually at different rates.

Honesty, love and respect are essential ingredients of responsible relationships.

Christians try to develop skills to improve self-understanding, communication, working cooperatively with others and service to the community.



JUSTICE/MORALITY:

In all our lives there is a struggle between individual rights and the needs of the community.

The bases of moral decision-making within a Catholic context are: a well-formed conscience, understanding of sin and desire for reconciliation. To develop a well-formed conscience:

- look to scripture, law of God and church teaching
- apply teachings to daily life
- consider the consequences of the choices we may make
- pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit
- act in accordance with our formed conscience.

Gospel values help us make social, political and economic choices.

Lack of respect for self and others can lead to the abuse of the gift of sexuality.

Social sin and personal sin are attitudes and actions which undermine love and respect for individuals, for community and for all creation.

We grow in knowledge and ways to use our talents and abilities to advance the coming of the kingdom.

The temptation to make selfish choices is not sinful. Deliberately choosing to make selfish choices is sinful.

PRAYERS TO BE LEARNED

NICENE CREED

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

It is recommended that traditional prayers and selected biblical passages, particularly psalms, be committed to memory.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

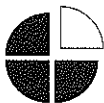
VOCABULARY:

ANNUNCIATION	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	PILGRIM CHURCH
APOSTOLIC	REAL PRESENCE	REAL PRESENCE
ASSUMPTION	IMMANENCE	RECONCILIATION
AUTONOMY	INFINITE	REFORMATION
BIBLICAL INSPIRATION	JUSTICE	RELIGION
CANONIZE	LITURGICAL CALENDAR	REPENTANCE
CATECHESIS	MARIAN FEASTS	SECOND PERSON OF THE
CATECHUMEN	MARKS OF THE CHURCH	BLESSED TRINITY
CONVERSION	MESSIAH	SOCIAL SIN
DISCIPLESHIP	MONASTERY	SYNOPTIC GOSPEL
EASTER VIGIL	MONK	TEMPTATION
EVANGELIST	MORAL	THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES
FIRST PERSON OF THE	MYSTAGOGY	THIRD PERSON OF THE
BLESSED TRINITY	MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY	BLESSED TRINITY
GOSPEL VALUES	NICENE CREED	TRADITION
HERALD	PASSION	TRANSCENDENCE
HUMAN DIGNITY	PERSONAL SIN	SECOND COMING

TOPICAL DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNING HOURS FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

The content of systematic learning sessions for young adolescents should reflect a balance between acquired knowledge about Catholic doctrine and tradition AND skills for living gospel values. We suggest the following topical distribution of learning hours within each learning year for young adolescents (N.B.: YEARLY CYCLES NEED NOT BE COVERED SEQUENTIALLY):

	<u>CONTENT</u>	<u>Portion of Year's LEARNING HOURS</u>		<u>CONTENT</u>	<u>Portion of Year's LEARNING HOURS</u>
Cycle I	Bible/Old Testament	1/3	Cycle III	Church/Creed	1/3
	Jesus & the Gospel Message	1/3		Sacraments	1/3
	Personal Growth	1/6		Justice	1/6
	Prayer	1/6		Discipleship	1/6
Cycle II	Morality/Decision Making	1/3			
	Church History	1/3			
	Relationships	1/6			
	Human Sexuality	1/6			



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion students will be able to:

GOD:

- explain in their own words the mystery of the Trinity
- explain how God is revealed in creation, scripture, Jesus and other people
- be able to identify and explain key events in the life of Jesus and key themes of the teaching of Jesus

BIBLE:

- identify major themes of scripture and apply them to specific events in the Old and New Testaments
- interpret several Gospel passages and apply meaning to their own lives
- compare a parable in two/three of the synoptic gospels (e.g., Parable of the Marriage Feast - Matt. 22:1-14 & Luke 14:16-24)
- name 4 evangelists and describe briefly the purpose, intended audience and central theme of each gospel writer

CHURCH:

- recite from memory the taught definition of CHURCH
- define and explain TRADITION for Catholics
- identify and define the 4 MARKS OF THE CHURCH
- state in own words what is understood by concept of church as herald and pilgrim
- describe in own words some characteristics of the church in the Middle Ages c. 500 - 1500 A.D.
- define MONASTICISM and identify 3 contributions of monasteries to civilization and Christianity
- explain when and why various denominations developed in the Christian Church

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- define CREED
- compare Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed in terms of major articles of each
- explain what Catholics mean by the term REAL PRESENCE
- explain the process of the R.C.I.A.
- describe what happens during the CATECHUMENATE period of the R.C.I.A. process
- name the sacraments of initiation, of healing and in service of communion and explain how each affects your life as a Christian

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

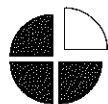
- illustrate in word or picture the major feasts in each season of the liturgical year
- define SAINTS and describe how they serve the church and the world

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- explain the meaning of the word RELIGION
- distinguish between faith and religion
- define DISCIPLESHIP and give some characteristics of a disciple of Christ
- describe 3 qualities of responsible relationships
- demonstrate skill in self-reflection, service and communication

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- define CONSCIENCE and describe the process by which it is formed
- describe the process of moral decision making
- define PERSONAL SIN and SOCIAL SIN and give examples of each
- distinguish between temptation and sin
- locate in scripture 5 passages which call disciples to be people of justice and peace
- using a case study, identify instances in which rights and responsibilities are in conflict
- apply the gospel values found in Matt. 25:31-46 to life today



OLDER ADOLESCENTS (GRADES 10-12)

KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

GOD:

Scripture provides many images of God.

How we image God shapes our understanding of God.

Images of God are strongly influenced by experiences with other persons.

The mystery of the Trinity, the relationship of the three persons sharing one nature, is central to an understanding of God. We come to know Jesus BOTH as a person who lived in a particular historical and social world AND as the Christ of faith.

Proclamation of the kingdom of God (evangelization) is central to the message and mission of Jesus.

The power of Jesus' death-resurrection lives on in the community of faith.

Jesus' paschal mystery is the assurance that death and sin have been conquered.

BIBLE:

Gospels progressed from the teachings of Jesus to the oral tradition of the disciples and then to written documents.

Parallel passages and other scripture footnotes are tools beyond the text to help read the Bible.

St. Paul wrote epistles in response to problems in the early churches.

Inspiration and inerrancy are concepts needed to understand scripture.

The Christian canon of the Bible developed over several centuries.

CHURCH:

Throughout history, church structure and governance have developed in response to changing historical circumstances.

Canon law is the official code of laws used for governance within the Roman Catholic Church.

Doctrinal statements about the person of Jesus have been developed by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and defined in the major church councils.

Theology is the systematic discipline which tries to express the experience of God in intelligent terms. ("faith seeking understanding" - St. Anselm)

The doctrine of papal infallibility was proclaimed at Vatican Council I.

The church lives out its mission through community, prayer, teaching, proclamation and service.

The mystery of the church has been described by identifying models or aspects of the church, such as body of Christ, institution, community, sacrament, servant, herald.

The church encourages knowledge of and appreciation for religious traditions of all people. (interfaith)

The church calls Christians to work for unity among all the churches through ecumenism and interfaith cooperation.

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

There are a variety of prayer styles to be experienced: formal, meditation, centering, informal, communal, liturgical, spontaneous, scriptural and personal.

There are ways to develop a richer, more mature relationship with Jesus as a friend, guide and model.

Each sacrament is celebrated for a special purpose at a special time in the life of the community and a person's life.

Eucharist is the central celebration of the church and sign of our unity as Christians.

The eucharist is a memorial of the Last Supper during which Jesus fulfilled the Passover ritual.

The liturgy of the hours is the official morning and evening prayer of the church.

Sacraments are community rituals which celebrate in faith our encounter with the mystery of God.

SPECIAL SEASONS AND PEOPLE:

The church year is structured by liturgical seasons which enrich a person's faith life.

Each liturgical season has its own symbols, celebrations and significance. (Emphasize ordinary time and the readings of ordinary time.)

Lent is a time of intense preparation for the RCIA candidates.

The gospels of Matthew, Luke and John present the only portraits of Mary in scripture.

The feast of Mary, Mother of God, celebrates both the humanity and divinity of Jesus.

Church councils have defined Mary as Mother of the Church.

Canonization, the process for declaring a person a saint, involves a rigorous investigation of every aspect of a person's life.

It includes three stages: venerable, blessed and saint.

FAITH / IDENTITY:

Each person is called to become a saint. (holiness)

Each person is called to a lifestyle which reflects Christian virtues.

Spirituality is the development of a lifestyle which reflects a person's awareness of God's presence within and among us.

Our talents and gifts have been given to us by God for the service of others.

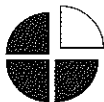
Vocation is God's call to cooperate in God's ongoing saving work of creation through our lifestyle, career and relationships.

Development of a consistent ethic for life on which to base all relationships and decisions is a necessary task.

Intimacy is the capacity to make commitments beyond self, to share, to risk, and to be mutually honest.

Christians believe in judgment after death, hope for eternal life with God in heaven and admit the possibility of eternal separation from God in hell.

All human virtues are grouped around the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.



JUSTICE / MORALITY:

In making moral decisions it is important to consider the teachings of the church as well as the consequences of our actions for ourselves and others.

Every moral issue and each personal decision has both individual and social dimensions.

The moral decisions a person makes determine the kind of human person one becomes.

Conscience formation is a life-long process requiring development of skills for resolving moral dilemmas.

Sin is primarily concerned with deliberately damaging relationships, not breaking laws.

Venial sin refers to sins which weaken our relationship with God and others.

Mortal sin involves deliberate choices which are so serious they are capable of destroying our relationship with God and others.

Skills for effective conflict resolution can be developed.

Justice and peace are Christian values grounded in scripture (e.g., the gospels, beatitudes, commandments, works of mercy, etc.)

We are called to care for God's creation and to live as good neighbors in the world community.

We are called to respect the rights of others and work to change structures and authority that deny human rights.

PRAYERS TO BE LEARNED

It is recommended that traditional prayers and selected biblical passages, particularly psalms, be committed to memory.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

VOCABULARY:

CANON LAW
CANONIZATION
CARDINAL VIRTUES
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
CHRIST OF FAITH
CHRISTIAN CANON
OF THE BIBLE
CONSISTENT ETHIC FOR LIFE
CHURCH AS BODY OF CHRIST
CHURCH AS COMMUNITY
CHURCH AS HERALD
CHURCH AS INSTITUTION
CHURCH AS SACRAMENT

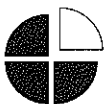
CHURCH AS SERVANT
CHURCH COUNCIL
DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH
DOCTRINE
ECUMENISM
EVANGELIZATION
EX CATHEDRA
FATHERS OF THE CHURCH
FINAL JUDGMENT
IMAGE OF GOD
INERRANCY
INTERAITH
JESUS OF HISTORY

LITURGY OF THE HOURS
MAGISTERIUM
MORAL DILEMMA
MORTAL SIN
ORAL TRADITION
PAPAL INFALLIBILITY
PARALLEL PASSAGES
PASTORAL LETTER
RITUAL
SPIRITUALITY
THEOLOGY
VENIAL SIN
VOCATION

TOPICAL DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNING HOURS FOR OLDER ADOLESCENTS

The content of systematic learning sessions for older adolescents should reflect a balance between acquired knowledge about Catholic doctrine and tradition AND skills for living gospel values. We suggest the following topical distribution of learning hours within each learning "year" for older adolescents (N.B.: YEARLY CYCLES NEED NOT BE COVERED SEQUENTIALLY):

	<u>CONTENT</u>	<u>Portion of Year's LEARNING HOURS</u>
Cycle I	Jesus of History	1/3
	Morality	1/3
	World Religions	1/6
	Prayer	1/6
Cycle II	Faith/Revelation (God questions)	1/3
	Worship/Sacramental Life	1/3
	Paul and his Letters	1/6
	Justice and Peace	1/6
Cycle III	Church: Holy Spirit/Models	1/3
	Scripture: Hist. Lit. development	1/3
	Call (Vocation)	1/6
	Intimacy/Love	1/6



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion students will be able to:

GOD:

- situate and describe 5 images of God in the Old Testament and New Testament and... state how each image influences/modifies their personal image of God
- describe in what sense the church uses the term MYSTERY
- compare and contrast the Jesus of history with the Christ of faith
- describe their present understanding of the doctrine of the Incarnation
- explain why the paschal mystery is central to the Christian faith

BIBLE:

- describe the Jesus presented by John and contrast with the Jesus presented by Mark, Luke and Matthew
- give thumbnail sketch of everyday life at the time of Jesus
- consult *Gospel Parallels* and compare the same parable
- locate on a map the church communities to whom Paul addressed his epistles
- identify two pastoral problems which Paul addressed in his letters to the church at Corinth
- explain why we find different numbers of books in different versions of the Bible
- explain the difference between INSPIRATION and INERRANCY
- demonstrate basic skills for scripture study

CHURCH:

- consult the index of the current (1983) Code of Canon Law to locate canons relating to a specific topic
- define the term THEOLOGY and indicate 3 ways in which it is helpful to church teaching
- explain what Catholics mean when they use the term MAGISTERIUM
- define DOCTRINE
- match key statements about Jesus with major church councils
- name 2 church doctrines which have been defined "ex cathedra"
- explain to a non-believer the costs and rewards of discipleship
- recite from memory Jesus' call to unity (John 17:11) and explain why it could help inspire the calling of Vatican Council II by Pope John XXIII
- name three or four major world religions and describe the basic elements of creed/code/cult/community for each

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- recall the theological virtues and restate in adult terms
- create two experiences of prayer using a different style for each
- describe the process of sacramental initiation into the church community
- explain why regular celebration of eucharist is central to Catholic identity and worship
- prepare a liturgy using appropriate resources, e.g., wedding, funeral, wake service

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

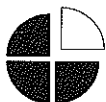
- write a description or create a graphic of the liturgical calendar complete with seasons and feasts, suitable for use in teaching third graders
- draw a portrait of Mary based solely on scripture passages
- explain the process used by the Catholic Church to canonize saints

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- demonstrate an understanding of holiness using examples from everyday life
- name some of the opportunities and practices which can contribute to spiritual development
- identify one's gifts and talents and list ways they can be used for Christian service
- write a job description for three different types of Christian ministry including skills for each
- describe a person, fictional or real who lacks a capacity for intimacy and explain why
- describe what you understand about Christian belief in death, judgment, heaven and hell

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- select a character from a movie, TV series or a public figure from history or contemporary society whose life seems to demonstrate that the pattern of moral decisions we make determines the kind of person we become
- recall the process of conscience formation and apply this process to a contemporary moral issue
- analyze a current moral issue, articulate the values at stake, apply Catholic teaching and list responsible decision/actions
- describe what is understood as a consistent ethic for life
- distinguish between mortal and venial sin
- explain how each of the 10 Commandments, which are expressed as law, is concerned with breaking relationships
- illustrate in words how the Great Commandment summarizes the 10 Commandments
- locate in scripture, passages which demonstrate that justice and peace are scripture values
- explain how the passage from John 13:12 (Jesus washing the feet of the apostles) is a fundamental challenge for all Christians
- trace the development of Church's concern for justice and peace through the use of major social encyclicals and pastoral letters (Catholic Social Teaching)



ADULTS

KEY CONCEPTS IN CURRICULUM

It is not easy to specify content for any age group and it is particularly difficult in the adult area. Adulthood involves the integration of all previous systematic learning in ways that have relevance in one's life. Clarification of previously misunderstood or expansion of partially understood learnings may be needed. Whatever religious knowledge helps adults integrate the Christian vision into the fabric of their lives is appropriate content.

Appropriate content considerations for adults include:

GOD:

God is more than a person can express in words, but each person is to find the very best words to talk about God.

God is a community: a relationship between the persons of the Trinity.

The doctrine of the Trinity, developed by the early church, was formulated into creeds during early church councils.

Systematic theology probes the growing edge of a person's understanding of God and better ways to talk about that understanding of God.

Images of God influence the nature of a person's relationship with God.

What Jesus said and did has implications for the way I live my life now and in the future.

Jesus, no longer limited by the human dimensions of time and space, influences a particular way of life for all believers.

The role of the Holy Spirit in our lives is God's dynamic power of love and truth.

BIBLE:

Basic tools and learned skills are helpful to study scripture.

The following tools and concepts would assist an adult's understanding of the scriptures:

- the growth, composition, historical development, writing styles, method and structure of the Old and New Testaments
- major themes found in the letters of St. Paul
- process of canonical selection of biblical texts

CHURCH:

Appropriate knowledge of the following concepts of church would enrich an adult's understanding of the Roman

Catholic tradition:

- understanding of what is changeless and changing in church:
 - doctrine and theology
 - models or aspects of the church
 - authority and content of pastorals, encyclicals and other teaching documents of the church
 - role of tradition in the church's receiving and handing on the core of our religion to new members
 - role of the "sensus fidelium" in the Catholic tradition
 - role of Magisterium, i.e., teaching office of the church
- unity and diversity within the Catholic Church
- ecumenism
- world religions
- history of church councils
- documents of Vatican II
- application of doctrine and theology to current situations

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

Rich variety of prayer forms and liturgical rites within the Catholic tradition

Deepened understanding of liturgy and sacramental life

Preparation for sacramental reception (e.g., marriage, infant baptism, etc.) which respects the integrity of all significant persons

SPECIAL SEASONS AND PEOPLE:

Deeper understanding of the liturgical calendar and its feasts and seasons

Examination of various spiritualities of saints, e.g., Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*; Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*; etc.

FAITH / IDENTITY:

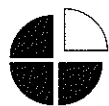
Lifelong development of Christian identity is assisted by:

- acknowledging the strengths and limitations of our unique giftedness
- identifying who we are as religious persons
- assistance/direction in search of values and meaning of life
- skills for dealing with changing life stages
- skills for building relationships which respect self and others
- skills and support for dealing with life crises (e.g., birth of handicapped child; death of infant, parent, spouse; loss of job; substance abuse, etc.)
- content and methods for complementary role of family religious education

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

Christian living is enhanced by acquiring skills:

- peacemaking skills (e.g., conflict resolution, listening, cooperation)
- skill for social and cultural analysis
- updated understandings of moral issues
- moral content of social issues
- skills in building up of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity and freedom



PRAYER

As indicated in the content section, adults should have access to and guidance in exploring the rich variety of prayer forms and liturgical rites within the Catholic Tradition.

VOCABULARY:

It is anticipated that adults will develop a religious vocabulary adequate to allow them to study and express relevant content. Hopefully, this vocabulary will be comparable to that which the same persons acquire for other important aspects of their lives.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In a broad sense the most important understanding for adults is the knowledge that none of the formulations or symbols used to talk about God can fully express/probe the depths of the reality of God. For this reason the single most valuable learning outcome for adults is hunger for more life-long learning about religious matters.

Adults will grow in their ability to:

GOD:

- cultivate a questioning mind in religious matters
- familiarize themselves with sound resources which explain our religious heritage
- identify the presence of God in ordinary human experience
- respond to the Gospel call to discipleship

BIBLE:

- study scripture in light of its historical-critical context
- explore how scriptures were interpreted and applied at different times in history
- locate and use resources available for sound scripture study
- apply message of scripture to personal life

CHURCH:

- articulate the process by which church doctrine and tradition evolved
- distinguish the roles of MAGISTERIUM and SENSUS FIDELIUM
- explore the church's faithfulness to the core gospel message throughout history as it adapted/responded to specific situations

PRAYER / WORSHIP:

- discover that prayer fills a basic human need
- locate and use resources available for liturgical celebrations

SEASONS / PEOPLE:

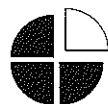
- identify particular saints as role models
- integrate the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year into their personal and communal faith journey

FAITH / IDENTITY:

- set life goals that are comprehensive and clear enough to support faith growth in times of crisis and in daily life

JUSTICE / MORALITY:

- locate sound resources to help in dealing with life crises
- cultivate the process of continuing conscience development
- analyze moral issues, articulate the values at stake, apply Catholic teaching and take personal responsibility for making ethical decisions which are consistent with Christian values
- develop competencies in discernment, conflict resolution and cooperation
- demonstrate skills essential for peacemaking
- take action on behalf of justice and peace
- translate Christianity into practical living in the home, community and workplace



CHRISTIAN FORMATION

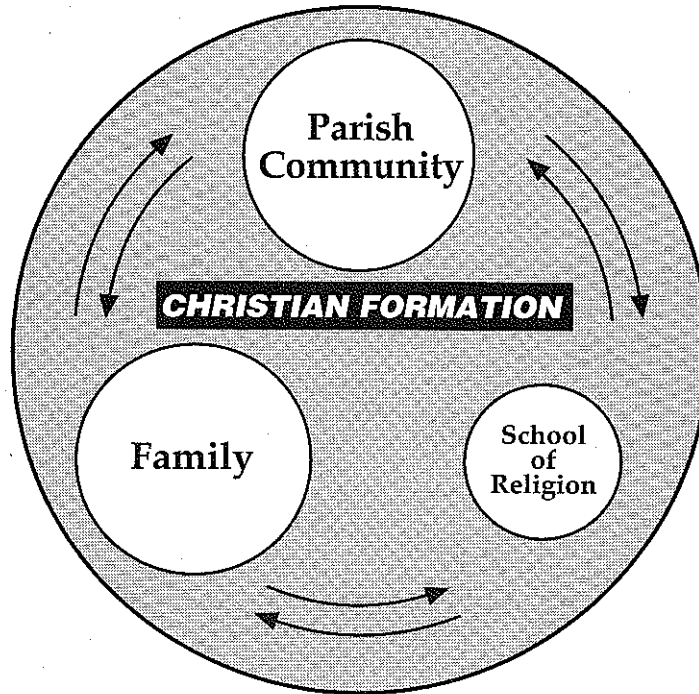
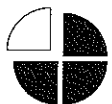


Diagram #1

I. INTRODUCTION

- #1 This section of the Handbook for Religious Education focuses upon the formational component of religious education. While catechesis has enjoyed a variety of meanings throughout the history of the church, increasingly it has come to be understood as those activities pertaining to the initiation and formation of individuals and the faith community. (NCD #39)
- #2 The paschal mystery is the foundation of Christian faith. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain." (I Cor 15:17) Through word and sacrament, the faithful are drawn ever more deeply into this mystery and strengthened in true discipleship to take up the cross and follow after Christ knowing that: "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him" (II Tim 2:11) **Therefore, this mystery of our salvation is the heart of every Christian celebration and the stimulus for catechesis.**
- #3 Catechetical formation presumes a faith response to God's revelation in Christ. In faith, Christians grow in understanding their identity and destiny as sons and daughters of God. They celebrate the sacred mysteries and dedicate themselves to building up the body of Christ and continuing his mission in the world. The goal of Christian formation is continual conversion.
- #4 Family life and parish life provide the primary context for Christian formation understood as "a life-long process for the individual and a concerted pastoral activity of the Christian community." (NCD #32) Modeling, sponsorship, faith sharing and discernment are means of formation. And every family and pastoral activity has a formational dimension.
- #5 Although the parish community and family provide the primary milieu for formation, the parish school of religion (cf. "Principles" #7) and, where applicable, the Catholic school, contribute to effective Christian formation through their efforts to provide quality systematic learning (cf. "Systematic Learning" #1ff). Sponsorship, faith sharing and discernment rely on a thorough knowledge of the message of faith and the traditions of the church. Thus formation and systematic learning are interdependent, each contributing to the catechesis of an individual toward a faith that is mature, conscious and active.



#6 Catechesis provides the context for commitment to the gospel and living the faith in the community. Unlike systematic learning, formation does not easily lend itself to assessment and evaluation. Ultimately, the only indicator of success in Christian formation is: "By their fruits you will know them." (Mt. 7:16)

#7 The following guidelines describe the roles and organization of family and parish life as they pertain to Christian formation.

II. FAMILY

#8 The family is the domestic church. The meaning of this traditional Christian idea is that the home is the Church in miniature. The Church is the sacrament of God's love . . . a communion of faith and love . . . a mother and teacher . . . at the service of the whole human family as it goes forward towards its ultimate destiny. In the same way, the family is a community of life and love. It educates and leads its members to their full human maturity and it serves the good of all along the road of life. In its own way, it is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the Church. (John Paul II quoted in *Family Perspective*, p. 21)

Definition

#9 A family is founded on a covenant between persons. This relationship of mutual trust and loyalty is a model of faith. Existing as the first community of faith, the family is a sacramental sign to both its own members and the larger community. While it rises from the sacred union of husband and wife, it is more than just a relationship between them, for each is related to parents and other kin. These relationships and responsibilities are broadened by marriage. The blessings of children, both natural and adopted, extend the family from generation to generation.

#10 The members of our family are our first companions. Their mutual care, concern and compassion provide a context for developing the potential of each member at every age. Burdens are shared and challenges are issued as family members progress through one stage of life to the next. The works of Eric Erikson, James Fowler and John Westerhoff among others have contributed to our understanding of the psychological and faith development in the individual. (See "Practical Helps")

#11 The family itself is a system which exhibits a developmental life cycle. The passage of each member from one stage of life to the next disturbs the equilibrium of the whole system. Such crises provoke a reorientation of identity within the individual and a readjustment of relationships among all members of the extended family. The family models a process of continual conversion. (cf. "Personnel" #11-12)

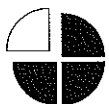
Christian Family Catechizes the Community

#12 The Christian family is a sacramental sign of faith, community and conversion, and it is called to go beyond itself and build up the larger society by its hospitality toward all peoples and its political involvement and activity. The family shares in the mission of the whole church of which it is a part by its efforts of evangelization and its service. (See *Family Perspective*, pp. 20-21)

#13 While the Christian family is a bearer of the Good News to the whole world, parents have a primary responsibility toward their own children.

Family Life Catechizes Children

#14 The Christian family, in fact, is the first community called to announce the Gospel to the human person during growth and to bring him or her through a progressive education and catechesis, to full human and Christian maturity. (FC #2)



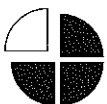
- #15 Families pass on to their children attitudes of awe, reverence and an appreciation for the sacredness of all life. Their expression of love enables children to give of themselves and to begin to experience the paschal mystery. It is within the family that children learn the need for forgiveness and how to forgive others. Family meals and celebrations prepare them for the eucharistic feast and the rituals of the church. (Chr. L. #62)

Parents Catechize Children Directly

- #16 While the most fundamental Christian formation within a family occurs spontaneously, parents are also the first teachers of their children. (GE #3) As soon as children learn to speak, they may be invited to praise God and pray for their own needs and the needs of others. Families encourage a regular prayer life by progressively inviting children to participate in the prayer and worship life of the whole family.
- #17 At an early age, children can come to know God and Jesus through the stories of our faith. Symbols and sacramentals enrich the religious life of childhood as do family celebrations of the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year. Families are also encouraged to recover the ancient tradition of blessing their children. (See *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*) As children grow, the connections between events, decisions, lifestyles and the faith can be shared with them. Parents introduce children to the wider mission of the church when they participate together in works of service and evangelization.
- #18 Family members continue to catechize each other throughout their lives as they share stories, mourn and rejoice with each other, and come together for special events, most notably for sacramental celebrations of their members.
- #19 For good or ill, children are formed by the faith and practice of their families. (Canon #226) For these reasons, families have both a right and a responsibility to be intimately involved in the catechetical preparation for and the celebration of sacraments with their children. Parents present their children for initiation into the ecclesial community when they request the sacrament of baptism for them. In this sacrament, parents accept the primary responsibility for bringing their children up to know and worship God and love their neighbors. This initiation into the body of Christ is completed in the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist each of which is preceded by a discernment of readiness and a period of immediate preparatory catechesis. With the guidance and assistance of the larger community, parents bear the primary responsibility for this discernment and catechetical formation. (cf. "Personnel" #14)

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

- #20 **Parish**
Families find support in the parish particularly at critical moments. The various ministries, committees, groups and agencies within a parish not only provide help and support for those in need, but are also avenues for families to reach out and support others. Parishes set up processes for discernment and catechesis for sacramental initiation. (cf. "Personnel" #20)
- #21 **School of Religion**
Parishes and Catholic schools organize formal programs of religious instruction and offer opportunities for prayer and worship, community building, service and social action, pre-school through adult. (See "Systematic Learning")



III. PARISH

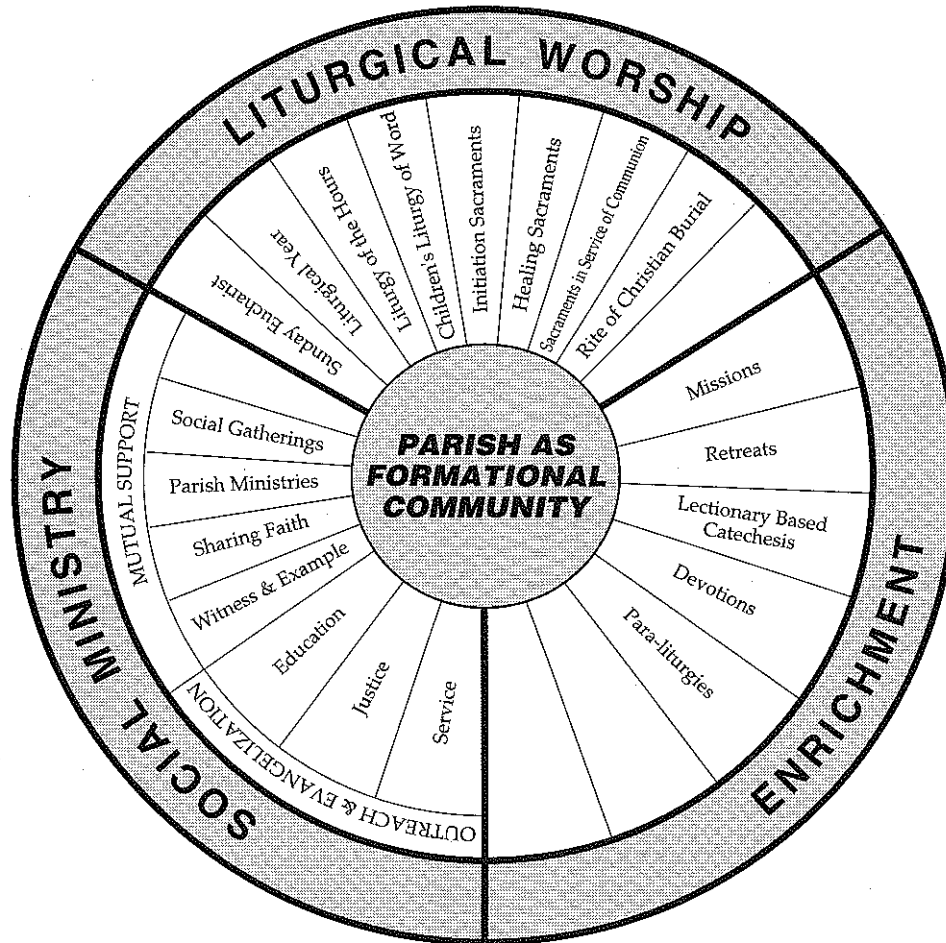


Diagram #2

#22 The local parish is the context for the growth and development of the People of God. Like the family, everything the parish does catechizes. Where it places its emphasis, how it contributes and spends money, the functions it chooses to sponsor, and how its members relate to one another all give witness to an inherent value system. (See: *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community*, #61 and *Chr. L.* #26-#27; #61)

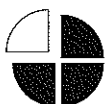
#23 On a more intentional level, the parish catechizes through formal instruction. It is, moreover, the privileged place where Christian formation occurs through: (Dia. #2)

- social ministry — in its outreach and mutual support;
- liturgical worship — in its celebrations, instructions, and discernment;
- enrichment programs — which contribute to the development of prayer and spirituality.

(cf. "Personnel" #19-26)

A. SOCIAL MINISTRY

#24 Social ministry occurs in parish life whenever persons put their love for others into action. Parishioners work to build and strengthen the parish community as well as to create a world where all people can live in dignity and freedom.



Mutual Support and Sharing

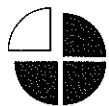
- #25 Through the example and encouragement of the parish community, people learn to follow a Christian lifestyle. In this milieu, persons exercise their faith and draw others to embrace Christ through their witness. It is a place where people play, pray, and care for each other.
- #26 A belief shared is a faith strengthened. Talking freely about God and reflecting on God's presence in the light of scripture and tradition enables individuals to grow. Sharing with others challenges, empowers, and summons a response to God and to others.
- #27 Parish ministries to and with families with young children, youth, young adults, the sick and elderly, the divorced, widowed and grieving, among others, provide opportunities for mutual support and sharing. Participation in ecclesiastically approved movements such as Marriage Encounter, RENEW, and Small Christian Communities is encouraged. Parish festivals and other social gatherings also provide opportunities where community can grow and where mutual support and sharing take place.

Outreach

- #28 Parishioners not only minister to one another, but also extend a healing reach to neighborhood, city and town, and the world community. Putting gospel values to work by reaching out in response to concerns is what we call pastoral outreach.
- #29 There are three general aspects to pastoral outreach:
- Direct Service** which helps individuals or families survive their present crises;
 - Social Action** which brings individuals or groups together to eliminate the root causes of a problem;
 - Education** which enables individuals or groups to examine present needs and underlying causes, and to respond effectively to current problems.

- #30 The following table clarifies these distinctions:

DIRECT SERVICE	SOCIAL ACTION	EDUCATION
<i>Goal: to meet immediate needs and bring about personal involvement</i>	<i>Goal: to attempt to break the cycle that causes the problem</i>	<i>Goal: to broaden awareness, and to raise consciousness</i>
• Deals with needs and problems of individuals	• Deals with policies of social institutions (bank, school, government)	• Deals with information needed to respond to social problems
• Does something FOR someone	• Does something WITH someone	• Discusses and tries to understand the problem
• One-to-one	• Group	• Individual and/or group
• Charity	• Justice	• Education
• Deals with effects	• Deals with causes	• Tries to understand the causes and effects
• Works to alleviate a crisis	• Works for institutional or social change	• Works to identify and research both immediate and structural changes
• Assists	• Empowers	• Teaches
<i>Examples:</i> Human Services Committees, St. Vincent de Paul Societies, food pantries, clothing drives, visiting the home bound, shelters, lifeline	<i>Examples:</i> voter registration, community organizing, supporting political candidates	<i>Examples:</i> speakers, religious education curriculum, homilies, tutoring programs, discussion groups



#31 While education for social justice is included in the systematic learning component of religious education programs, it is also part of the formational ministry of the parish. On-going experience in social ministry is essential to Christian formation for children as well as for adults. Age-appropriate activities can be included in all parish social ministry. (See: "Christian Living Components" in *Practical Helps*.)

B. LITURGICAL WORSHIP

#32 As people of God, we "are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation called to announce the praises of the one who called us out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 3:9) This sacred work of the church called liturgy is the "summit toward which [all] activity . . . is directed . . . [and] the fountain from which all her power flows." (SC #10) It is as a worshiping community that we most perfectly "express in our lives and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ" and the reality of the church. (SC #2) The Spirit and the church enable us to participate in the liturgy whenever we celebrate the mystery of salvation in the sacraments.

#33 The purpose of liturgy is the worship of God. However, liturgical celebration is also catechetical. By its pattern of celebration and manner of participation, the parish community influences its members about the importance of fostering a life of faith and the value of sacraments. Liturgy is formational. It effects what it signifies. The church believes what it prays. The shape, matter and form of the celebrations as found in the rituals are the primary sources for catechesis about the liturgy.

Sunday Eucharist

#34 The observance of Sunday as the Day of the Lord is an immemorial Christian custom. This weekly assembly has always characterized Christianity. Sunday is the original Christian feast, the Sunday eucharist is the principal Christian celebration, and the parish is the primary eucharistic community. (See Chr. L. #26)

In their observance of the Lord's Day, the early Christians realized their identity and mission. In their eucharistic celebrations, they strengthened their faith, steadied themselves for further worship and service in society, helped to liberate themselves from the manifold pressures of an isolating and alienating existence, and readied themselves again to become clearly the life and leaven of the world."
(*Gathered in Steadfast Faith* #14)

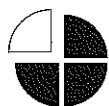
The celebration of the Sunday eucharist is the action of the whole church. All are enjoined to participate "knowingly, actively, and consciously." (SC #11)

#35 Art, environment, music, posture and gesture are all integral to the liturgical action. These experiences of the senses help unfold the mystery of the fourfold presence of Christ in the word, the bread and wine, in the priest, and in the entire assembly of the people of God. The total Sunday observance is itself a sacramental sign.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

#36 When children are present at the eucharist with adults, great care must be taken so that they do not feel neglected because of their inability to participate or to understand what happens and what is proclaimed in the celebration.

#37 The *Directory for Masses with Children* recommends that a separate liturgy of the word for children be celebrated in a space not too distant from the assembly. Children may be invited to join a special minister for this liturgy of the word after the opening prayer of the Mass. They return to the larger assembly during the preparation of the gifts. The shape and content of this service is that of a liturgy of the word including a proclamation of the readings of the day, responses, music, homily and prayer. However, all should be suitably adapted to the age and special needs of the children who are present. (See DMWC #17)



Liturgical Year

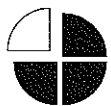
- #38 The cycle of the liturgical year "possesses a distinct sacramental power and efficacy to strengthen Christian life." (*Motu Proprio*, "The Liturgical Year and Calendar", 1969) The unfolding of the mysteries of redemption during the course of the year from Advent through Pentecost is not merely a commemoration of historical events. Through ritual celebration, these mysteries "are in some way made present . . . and the faithful are enabled to lay hold of them and become filled with saving grace." (SC #102)

Liturgy of the Hours

- 39 The liturgy of the hours is also the public worship of the Church and belongs to the whole people of God. Its purpose is to consecrate the entire day to God. While the rite provides seven prayer times for each day, the principal times are morning and evening. At morning prayer, we offer the day to God and ask for strength to live the Gospel. At evening prayer, we ask forgiveness for the day's failures and protection throughout the night. The hymns, psalms, canticles and intercessions of the office are the pre-eminent form of Christian prayer. Families, children, parish gatherings and small groups can all join in some form of this prayer which is also suitable for private recitation.

Sacraments

- #40 Like the eucharist, the primary purpose of all the sacraments is to give worship to God and to build up the body of Christ. (SC #59) While events in the life and faith of individuals might occasion the celebration of the sacraments, "celebration in the midst of the faith community, by the whole community, is the normal and normative way of celebrating any sacrament." (*Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* #31)
- #41 The presence and participation of the assembly is integral to each sacrament. The faith of all is nourished and strengthened by the celebration of a sacrament even when the focus of a liturgical rite is on particular individuals such as the bride and groom at marriage and those who are ill at the anointing of the sick. By the same token, the assembly ministers to those individuals who receive a sacrament in its midst. Because this celebration is the worship action of the entire church, the preparation for and celebration of the sacraments is the proper concern of the whole parish.
- #42 Each sacrament as an encounter with Christ, not only strengthens and nourishes faith, it presupposes faith. Candidates are admitted to a sacrament in stages. The first stage involves a discernment process to determine whether the faith development and readiness level of a candidate support his or her desire to celebrate the sacrament. Once basic readiness has been discerned, the parish assists the candidate in preparing for the sacrament through a special catechetical program that includes both systematic learning and formational activities. (See Charts #43-#53)



DISCERNMENT – GENERAL

#43 **Discernment** is a decision making process which includes prayer and dialogue between the person seeking the sacrament and the community through its ministers most immediately concerned with the preparation of the candidate, namely, the pastoral staff, catechists, and sponsors.

#44 **General signs of readiness** include:

- fundamental commitment to Christ and a life of continual conversion
- an openness to the work of the Spirit in one's life
- a habit of prayer, i.e., a living relationship with God through Jesus
- sufficient knowledge which would enable the person to celebrate the sacrament fruitfully and fulfill any responsibilities assumed

#45 This process of discernment demands great sensitivity on the part of all concerned, particularly in those cases involving the marginalized.* "A bruised reed should not be broken, nor a smoldering wick quenched." (Is. 42:3) Baptized Catholics have a right to the sacraments and parents not only have the right, but also the responsibility to request the sacraments for their children. (Canon #843.1) At the same time, the good of the community cannot be overlooked. Indiscriminate celebration of the sacraments can have a destructive effect on the life and growth of the community. (Canon #843.2) The integral role of the pastor in determining appropriateness and readiness of reception of a sacrament is to be maintained.

#46 In some cases, the good of all may best be served by delaying the reception of a sacrament. Such a decision cannot be made lightly and the reasons for a delay must be explained to the parties concerned. Delay is not rejection. Moreover, the burden is on the community and its pastoral ministers in particular, to seek out and maintain a relationship with those who have been delayed. Every effort must be made to strengthen their faith and bring them to a point when they can fruitfully celebrate the sacrament they have requested.

#47 ***NOTE:** Mental retardation in and of itself cannot be used as a reason for denying access to the sacraments. The U. S. bishops in 1988 called "upon the church leadership throughout the country to encourage conversion of mind and heart, so that all persons with disabilities may be invited to worship and to every level of service as full members of the body of Christ." (NCCB. *Resolutions*, 1988)

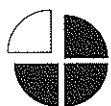
COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#48 **Family**

When the case involves a child, the parent/s or guardian are also to be involved in this process of discernment, and, if they proceed in good faith, their judgment as to the readiness of the child is to be relied upon. In order to help parents reach an informed judgment, the parish provides the means for the parents to become acquainted with the basic requirements for sacramental celebration and the discernment process.

#49 **School of Religion**

Education concerning the signs of readiness and the process for discernment lies in the domain of the school of religion.



IMMEDIATE CATECHESIS – GENERAL

#50 Immediate sacramental catechesis is **free-standing**, that is, distinct from any grade in the parish or school religious education program. Since the readiness level will vary from person to person, it cannot be considered automatic when an individual reaches a specific grade level. Programs of immediate catechesis are to be offered at least annually, just prior to the reception of the sacrament, specifically for those persons who have been identified as ready. **That is, the discernment process must be completed prior to enrollment for immediate catechesis.** During this period, the larger parish community supports the candidates by joining with them in prayer and by inviting them to participate in appropriate pastoral activities.

#51 ***Each parish is to have a policy regarding the process of discernment and catechetical preparation for each sacrament. Notice of this policy is to be periodically announced (e.g. in the parish bulletin) so that all will be aware of it.***

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#52 Family

Family involvement is essential to immediate catechesis. (See "Family", #8 – 21)

#53 School of Religion

Immediate catechesis for a particular sacrament involves the candidate, his or her sponsors (and parents, if the candidate is a young child) and catechists. Led by the catechists, together they consider in depth the meaning of the sacrament, its signs and symbols, and the candidate's relationship with the Lord and the community.

More specific guidelines for discernment and catechesis for particular sacraments are given in "Appendix A" of this document.

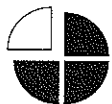
Christian Initiation

#54 St. Augustine referred to the church as a community of "Christians begetting Christians". Christian initiation is a concern of the whole community. Full initiation into the church occurs in stages and is celebrated in baptism, confirmation and eucharist.

#55 Baptism incorporates us into Christ and forms us into God's people. This first sacrament pardons all our sins, rescues us from the power of darkness and brings us to the dignity of adopted children, a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit.

#56 By signing us with the gift of the Spirit, confirmation makes us more completely the image of the Lord and fills us with the Holy Spirit, so that we may bear witness to him before all the world and work to bring the Body of Christ to its fullness . . .

#57 Finally, coming to the table of the eucharist, we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man so that we may have eternal life and show forth the unity of God's people. By offering ourselves with Christ, we share in the universal sacrifice, that is, the entire community of the redeemed offered to God by their High Priest, and we pray for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit, so that the whole human race may be brought into the unity of God's family. (CI #1-2)



RCIA

#58

The process for initiating adult candidates into the Catholic community of faith includes four distinct stages separated by three rites.

Stage 1	Evangelization	<i>a time, of no fixed duration, for inquiry and introduction to Gospel values and the local community; a period of initial conversion</i>
RITE I	ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ORDER OF CATECHUMENS	liturgical rite through which the candidates are made a part of the household of the church; they express and the church accepts their intention to respond to God's call to follow the way of Christ; sponsors present them to the community and testify to their intentions
Stage 2	Catechumenate	<i>a time, determined by the development of the individual, but not less than 1 full year, for nurturing the growth of the catechumen's faith and conversion through a catechesis centered on the lectionary; celebrations of the word, prayers of exorcism and blessing; the support of sponsors assists the process</i>
RITE II	ELECTION	a liturgical rite, usually celebrated at the cathedral on the First Sunday of Lent, which formally ratifies the catechumen's readiness for full initiation; the elect express their intention to celebrate these sacraments; they are presented to the bishop by godparents (who may or may not have been their sponsors)
Stage 3	Purification and Enlightenment	<i>usually the Lenten season immediately preceding the elect's initiation; a time of prayer and reflection centered on conversion and marked by the public celebration of the scrutinies</i>
RITE III	INITIATION	baptism, confirmation, and eucharist — usually integrated into the parish celebration of the Easter Vigil
Stage 4	Mystagogy	<i>usually the Easter season following initiation; the neophytes experience the fullness of the Christian community through pertinent catechesis, integration into the pastoral activities of the parish, and particularly by participating in the Sunday eucharist</i>

#59

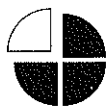
Priests, catechists, sponsors and godparents all support the candidate in his/her journey toward full initiation. The entire process may take some years. The whole assembly assists in welcoming the candidates into the parish and supporting them on their journey as it continues its own conversion and purification particularly during Lent.

#60

The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* has been adapted to include the Christian initiation of unbaptized children who have reached catechetical age, the preparation of previously baptized but uncatechized adults for confirmation and eucharist, and the reception of baptized Christians into the full communion of the Catholic church. For more specific guidelines, see *Journey in Faith: Guidelines for RCIA, Diocese of Worcester*.

#61

This process of initiation in stages, assisted by sponsors, and supported by ritual and the prayer of the entire community has become the model for all sacramental initiation.



SPONSORS

#62 Godparent/sponsors have a particular responsibility (Canon #872) and are to be offered specific training and support. In the case of adults and older children, the sponsor must know the candidate, be able to testify to the candidate's morals, faith and intentions, and be willing to help the candidate in his/her journey of faith. Godparents of infants help parents so that their children will come to profess and live the faith. In all cases it is a lifelong commitment.

#63 To be admitted to the role of godparent/sponsor, a person must:

- be designated by the one to be initiated, or, in the case of an infant, by the parents, or in their absence by the pastor or minister
- have qualifications for and intention of performing the role
- have completed the sixteenth year unless it seems to the pastor or minister that an exception is to be made for a just cause (Canon #874)
- be a confirmed Catholic who has received the eucharist and who leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared
- be neither the father nor the mother of the one to be initiated (Canon #874)
- be a Catholic who has not formally joined another denomination or religion

#64 **NOTE:** A sponsor's certificate is required for sponsors from outside the parish. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may not be admitted except as a witness to baptism and together with a Catholic sponsor. (Canon #874.2) Catholics who have attempted marriage after divorce are not to be denied the role of sponsor on the basis of remarriage alone if they are actively participating in parish life and liturgy.

Infant Baptism

#65 Infant baptism, celebrated shortly after birth, remains the norm for the believing community. However, infant baptism needs to be contextualized in a larger process of ongoing pastoral care, both **before** and **after** the child's baptism. (*Instruction on Infant Baptism*, #33) The baptism of a child is a cause for celebration for the whole community who are present to welcome the child into the family of the church.

#66 Beyond specific catechesis for parents and godparents, the introduction to the *Rite of Baptism* notes that instruction is to be supported by "prayer and religious rites". It recommends the "various elements provided in the rite of baptism for the celebration of the word." (#27; See *Book of Blessings* #156, #240)

#67 The policy and process for discernment and pre-baptismal preparation involving the participation of parents and godparents is carried out by a baptismal team including the minister, catechist(s), and other supporting members of the community.

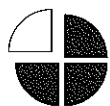
#68 After baptism, the parish continues ministering to families with young children through home visits and other support activities.

#69 Further guidelines for discernment and catechesis are given in "Appendix A" of this document.

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#70 **Family**
Believing parents give thought to the baptism of their child and "inform their pastors of the coming birth and prepare themselves spiritually." (*Instruction on Baptism*, 1980 #29) (cf. #48)

#71 **School of Religion**
Church ministers continue to support families after the baptism by continuing adult education and parenting courses.



Confirmation

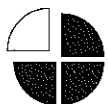
- #72 Those who were baptized in infancy continue on their journey toward full Christian initiation through the sacrament of confirmation. In this sacrament, the confirmandi ratify their baptismal promises, "are enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit . . . [and the sacrament] strengthens them and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith." (Canon #879)
- #73 All those who offer proof of baptism, who have reached the age of discretion and who have not previously been confirmed may request the sacrament. (Canon #889) The appropriate time for the reception of the sacrament of confirmation is the subject of much discussion. Pastoral practice has varied throughout history. For a fuller discussion of this debate to date, see "Appendix B."
- #74 Admission to the sacrament is preceded by a process of discernment and a suitable preparatory catechesis involving not only the candidates, but the parents and/or sponsors as well as catechists and pastoral staff. The entire community supports this preparation through prayer and ritual.
- #75 **NOTE:** During this period of the implementation of the RCIA and the clarification of our understanding of Christian initiation of those baptized in infancy, pastoral practice will vary. For example, the National Statutes for the RCIA call for the complete initiation of unbaptized children of catechetical age. However, this statute assumes that this adaptation will be practiced within a fully developed adult catechumenate. It does not envision an implementation of the RCIA for children only. Furthermore, sound pastoral principles will always be the foundation and guide for variations in sacramental practice. Innovation on the part of individuals without consulting the bishop and without parochial preparation and support is not sound practice.
- #76 Further guidelines for discernment and catechesis are given in "Appendix A" of this document.

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

- #77 **Family**
Families model a lifestyle of witness and service, support the decision of the candidates and celebrate with them.
- #78 **School of Religion**
Educates the candidates to understand the meaning of the baptismal promises, the sacramental life and the mission of the church. It also instructs on the meaning of the ritual of confirmation.

First Eucharist

- #79 Admission to eucharist completes the process of initiation. "From first communion on [children] can as full members of Christ's body take part actively with the people of God in the eucharist, sharing in the Lord's table and the community of their brothers and sisters." (DMWC #12)
- #80 Children who have attained the use of reason, who can offer proof of baptism and who have been deemed ready through a suitable process of discernment and immediate catechesis may be admitted to this sacrament — after being prepared according to their capacity by penance. (Canon #914 and DMWC #12). See #83 below and # 91-100.
- #81 The discernment and catechesis prior to first eucharist involves the pastor, parents and/or sponsors, catechists as well as the children themselves. The catechesis for first eucharist should be supported by prayer and ritual with the parish community. The role of the community in both the on-going and immediate catechesis for first eucharist deserves special note. During their preparation, candidates not only learn the truths of faith regarding the eucharist, but also how to participate actively. The worshiping community, gathered at Sunday eucharist, is the primary role model for these candidates. This community must also be prepared to welcome first com-



municants as brothers and sisters at the table of the Lord. It is a special moment in the life of the whole parish as well as the children and their families.

#82 Further guidelines for discernment and immediate catechesis regarding this sacrament are given below in "Appendix A."

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

Family

#83 Patterns of hospitality, celebration, sharing meals, mutual forgiveness, and gratitude all contribute to a child's understanding of eucharist.

Note: "In keeping with the Code of Canon Law, the Holy See's recent instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* and other pastoral directives, I would like pastors to ensure that the first communion of children is always 'preceded by sacramental confession and absolution.' (Canon 914, RS #87) Candidates for First Penance and First Communion should have a full catechesis that honors their age and condition for each of the sacraments. If First Communion is anticipated in the spring, candidates should be prepared for and celebrate the sacrament of Penance the previous fall, perhaps during the season of Advent."

Most Rev. Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester
June 23, 2004

School of Religion

#84 Provides separate processes for the discernment of readiness and immediate catechesis for eucharist and penance. Schedules processes such that parents will have time to form a considered judgment as to the readiness of their child for each sacrament. Ensures that the preparation processes for these sacraments will not become conflated.

Sacraments of Healing

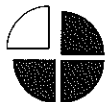
Anointing of the Sick

#85 "If one member suffers in the body of Christ, which is the church, all members suffer." (I Cor 12:26) Jesus' concern and care for the sick is well attested in the gospels. The church continues this ministry in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

#86 All baptized Christians share in this ministry by fighting against disease and by love shown to the sick as they visit them and lend assistance in time of need. Members of the parish community build up the faith and courage of the sick as they pray with and for them. (*Anointing of the Sick*, #33)

#87 In expectation of the healing power of the Spirit, the community joins with the sick as they celebrate together the sacrament of anointing. All parishioners are encouraged to participate in the occasional communal celebrations of this sacrament in the local parish. (*Anointing of the Sick*, #33)

#88 The parish catechizes for anointing of the sick primarily through its ministry to the sick and the celebration of the sacrament. Family, friends, and those who care for the sick have a particular responsibility "by their kind words prudently to dispose the sick person for reception of the sacraments at the proper time." (*Anointing of the Sick*, #34) The effects of anointing are not only for healing, but for hope and strength. It is to be celebrated not only with those who suffer from serious illness, physical or emotional, but also with those suffering from advanced age. (*Anointing of the Sick*, #8-12; James 5:14-15)



COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#89

Family

Catechesis for anointing occurs most often on occasions of illness of family members. Stories are recounted of gifts of healing, hope, and strength received from this sacrament. Families notify the parish and prepare their household so that an ill member may celebrate this sacrament.

#90

School of Religion

The school of religion provides instruction concerning who may be anointed, and dispels the lingering concepts of "last rites". It addresses critical issues such as suicide, sacredness of life, etc. Those engaged in ongoing ministry to the sick and elderly study the ritual.

Penance

#91

Christ welcomed sinners and reconciled them with God. (See Lk 5:20, 27-32; 7:48) He came that all might have peace and know the wideness of God's mercy. The people of God continue this ministry by calling sinners to repentance and by celebrating conversion and reconciliation in the sacrament of penance. (*Rite of Penance*, #7)

#92

In the body of Christ, the sin of one harms the others. All are called to continual conversion and all are called to help each other in doing penance. (*Rite of Penance* #5) The sacrament of penance is both an act of worship and an act of mutual charity.

#93

The *Rite of Penance* promulgated in 1973 includes several forms, the second of which ("Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution") most clearly expresses the nature of the sacrament as a communal act of worship and is the preferred form for sacramental initiation. Regular parish celebration of this form catechizes the community and enables individuals to participate in the ministry of reconciliation more fully.

#94

This same *Rite of Penance* also recommends the celebration of non-sacramental penitential services. (See Appendix II of the rite) Such celebrations help individuals develop a more mature conscience, foster repentance and arouse the desire to celebrate the sacrament.

#95

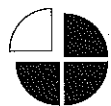
Those who have been alienated from the church for a long time might benefit from celebrating their return in stages supported by a team of special ministers and the prayer of the community. While not official rites of the church, such processes as "Re-Membering Church" are recommended. This latter is modeled on the ancient *Ordo Paenitentiae*.

#96

The initiation of children into the sacrament of penance is a responsibility of the whole community. The attitudes and practices of adults are a crucial factor in the formation of the attitudes and practices of children. The adult community is the primary role model for penance. Children need to experience this sacrament together with the whole community.

#97

All the Christian faithful who have attained the use of reason have a right to the sacrament of penance. The consistent moral teaching of the church, however, reminds us that no one is to be coerced into receiving any sacrament. Conversely, no person can be deprived of this sacrament, provided that readiness has been discerned by those immediately concerned. Catholics who have attained the use of reason have a right to the sacrament of penance unless prevented by law. One who completes his/her seventh year is presumed to have the use of reason (Canon #97.2) and thus required to confess serious sin of which one is conscious after careful examination of conscience at least once a year. (Canon #989) Readiness must be a prime consideration for preserving the integrity and richness of the sacrament of penance.



#98

Further guidelines for discernment and immediate catechesis regarding this sacrament are given below in "Appendix A."

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#99

Family

Families foster moral values, nurture conscience development, forgive and reconcile with one another, and celebrate this reconciliation in the sacrament of penance.

#100

School of Religion

The school of religion provides education in Christian morality and moral decision-making. It also instructs on the meaning and manner of celebrating the rite of penance.

Sacraments in Service of Communion

#101

Through baptism, confirmation and eucharist, all Christians are called to holiness and our mission to evangelize the world. Two other sacraments, orders and marriage, exist for the salvation of others. If they contribute to personal salvation, it is through the service of others. They confer a particular mission in the communion of the church and serve to build up the people of God. (CCC #153-4)

Matrimony

#102

Along life's journey, some are called to share Christian life with another person. They respond to this call and celebrate their union in the sacrament of matrimony. In Christian marriage, a man and woman freely enter into a loving covenant with each other in Christ. Through their steadfast and selfless love, they participate in the paschal mystery and are a sacramental sign of God's love and Christ's relationship to the church.

#103

Mutual love, support and growth in marriage are blessings of creation. "Marriage and conjugal love are naturally oriented toward the begetting and education of children" (NCD #130) and children multiply the blessings of marriage. The sacrament of marriage not only benefits the members of the nuclear family but is a blessing to the whole community. The *Rite of Marriage* calls the family to "be ready and willing to help and comfort all who come to [it] in need." (#37)

#104

The community at large is also called to a particular responsibility toward those who are married — to be true friends who will stand by the family both in joy and in sorrow. (See *Rite of Marriage* #37) As a responsibility of the whole parish, catechesis for marriage is not limited to immediate marriage preparation.

#105

The pastoral policy for marriage preparation promulgated in July 1986 through the diocesan Office for Family Life is the official marriage policy in this diocese and is available through that office.

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

#106

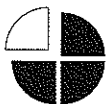
Family

"People begin to learn the meaning of married love and to acquire reverence for married life very early in childhood; parents are the primary catechists of their children with respect to such matters." (NCD #131)

#107

School of Religion

The school of religion educates about Christian lifestyles, the meaning of covenant, and offers relevant catechesis for adults at all stages of married life.



Holy Orders

- #108 Jesus Christ, by his sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection, has reconciled us with God. The Christian community shares in this priesthood when its members personally enter into this paschal mystery. (I Peter 2:5)
- #109 The call to orders, a distinct sacrament, is a call to leadership in the community of faith, to the ministry of facilitating the priesthood of the community. It is a sharing in the single priesthood of Christ. (LG #18)
- #110 As successors to the apostles, bishops enjoy the fullness of orders. Their ministry of service to the community as "teachers of doctrine, priests of sacred worship, and officers of good order" (LG #20) becomes present in the local congregations of the faithful in the person of the parish priest. Deacons are ordained to a ministry of service.
- #111 Leadership is necessary to the well being of the community. All have an obligation to support and cooperate with those who have been ordained to serve the local church. The parish also has a responsibility to call forth and support those who might have a vocation to ordained ministry. (NCD #133 and Canon #776)
- #112 The parish community catechizes as it exercises its own share in the priestly ministry of Christ, as it joins in the celebration of ordinations, and especially as it works together with its ordained ministers.

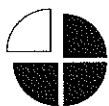
COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

- #113 **Family**
Families catechize through their hospitality toward and support of the ordained, and by supporting, encouraging and praying for family members called to ordained ministry.
- #114 **School of Religion**
The school of religion educates concerning the nature and role of priesthood as a baptismal call of all Christians, and concerning the specific nature of priestly orders.

Order of Christian Funerals

- #115 The death of a Christian is the occasion for a solemn ministry and catechesis for the whole community. The community intercedes on behalf of the deceased and consoles the sorrowing. (See *Order of Christian Funerals* #8) "Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for the gift of a life which has now been returned to God . . . [and to bring] hope and consolation to the living." (#5, #7)
- #116 Participation in the vigil (wake), funeral liturgy and rite of committal contributes to the formation of a Christian understanding of death. The planning of the particulars of these rites with family members are occasions for unity and reconciliation.
- #117 The formation, education and training of a parish ministry to the grieving is highly recommended. The ministry includes not only liturgical ministers, but also:

members of the community [who] should console the mourners with words of faith and support and with acts of kindness, for example, assisting them with some of the routine tasks of daily living. Such assistance may allow members of the family to devote time to planning the funeral rites with the priest and other ministers and may give the family time for prayer and mutual comfort. (*Rite of Christian Funerals*, #10)



C. ENRICHMENT

Missions

- #118 Parish missions and other renewal programs challenge the community to a life of continual conversion and growth. They can provide opportunities for evangelization and outreach. Missions are most effective when they are designed to provide experiences for all age groups — both intergenerationally and in peer groups.

Retreats

- #119 Retreats and days of recollection are part of a lifelong process of faith growth. They provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection away from the usual things we do. Retreats fill the need for quiet time alone as well as time for sharing faith, building community, and liturgical celebration. Rooted in scripture, retreats nurture an experience of God in the spirit and heart as well as the mind.
- #120 Retreats provide an atmosphere of peace, affirmation and acceptance. A setting which is safe and wholesome is important to an overall positive experience.
- #121 Since they are a major part of the spiritual growth process, retreats should be offered to people of all ages on a regular basis. While not replacing systematic learning, retreats provide another opportunity for people to learn about and experience God in unique ways.
- #122 Young people benefit from retreats especially when they are preparing for sacramental initiation. Connecting retreats to the lives and families of young people prevent them from becoming isolated experiences. They need to be given by a team of people who love the Lord, know their audience, and are competent, trained and prepared.
- #123 While young people may be required to make a retreat at various times, options should be available so that no one is forced to participate in a particular retreat.
- #124 Parishes are urged to consult the Diocesan Office for Youth Ministry when planning youth retreats.¹

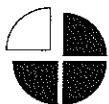
Devotional Prayer and Paraliturgies

- #125 Morning and evening prayer, mealtime grace, and traditional devotions such as the rosary and stations of the cross are all effective means of fostering the spiritual life. Both classical and contemporary Christian writers have developed a variety of prayer forms which individual Christians find helpful. Paraliturgies provide opportunities for people to express community experiences through a wide range of meaningful symbolic action, prayer and music.

Lectionary-based Catechesis

- #126 In the liturgy of the word, "God is speaking to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and nourishing their spirit." (GIRM Chap. 2, #33) The effects of this celebration may be extended and deepened in the lives of the faithful through a process of "breaking open the word." Based on the readings in the lectionary, this formational activity includes reflection, small group sharing and prayer. It could take place during an extended Sunday celebration between the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist, or at some

¹This philosophy and policy was developed by the Worcester Diocesan Task Force on Retreats.



other time on Sunday or during the week. Small sharing groups might be arranged according to age and interest, or they could be intergenerational. The family is an ideal setting. This ancient practice is the pre-eminent style of catechesis during the catechumenate, but it is recommended to everyone so that all might be more truly formed by the word of God. **This does not replace systematic learning.**

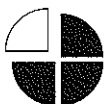
SUMMARY

#127

[The parish] must rediscover its vocation, which is to be . . . a welcoming home, where those who have been baptized and confirmed become aware of forming the People of God. In that home the bread of good doctrine and the Eucharistic Bread are broken for them in abundance in the setting of the one act of worship; from that home they are sent out day by day to their apostolic mission in all the centres of activity of the life of the world. (CT #67)

#128

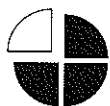
Faith is always a gift of God, yet its growth and development depend on the prayer-filled efforts of catechists, families, and the entire community. Responding to God's grace, all will further Christ's mission to build the kingdom.



APPENDIX A.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCERNMENT AND IMMEDIATE CATECHESIS IN SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

- #1 For a general discussion of the process of discernment and basic criteria for readiness, see #43-47. For a general discussion of the principles of immediate catechesis, see #50-53.
- #2 *Journey in Faith: Guidelines for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Diocese of Worcester, revised 1993, sets forth the details concerning this rite. These guidelines also apply to the initiation of children of catechetical age who have never been baptized.
- #3 As noted earlier, **readiness for a sacrament is determined prior to enrollment in the free-standing program of immediate catechesis. Scheduling for the discernment process as well as for immediate catechesis is a matter of serious pastoral concern.**
1. The parish provides a general instruction concerning the nature of the sacrament and criteria for readiness.
 2. Pastoral ministers charged with the responsibility for sacramental initiation allow themselves sufficient time to enter into a dialogue with parents/guardians and sponsors concerning the readiness of the child. (This is particularly true when the case involves a child being presented for confirmation, eucharist, or penance.)
 3. All involved take sufficient time to form a judgment regarding the readiness of the child.
 4. Enrollment in a sacramental preparation program follows the determination that the criteria for readiness have been met.
- #4 The school of religion designs sacramental preparation programs (i.e., the number and length of sessions, texts and other resources etc.) suited to the task, the needs of the participants and the local community. **Parishes are urged to make use of the consulting services and training programs of the diocesan office of religious education in designing their programs.** Parishes should forward to the diocesan office the name, address and phone number of a contact person for each of the sacramental programs so that information and new materials might be more easily shared.
- #5 When working with adults, catechists employ adult principles of learning. When working with children, catechists take into account their particular ages and other needs. (See "Systematic Learning" #36-78.)
- #6 The following "Guidelines for Sacramental Preparation" provide application of the general discernment for readiness and immediate catechesis policy for the sacraments of infant baptism, confirmation, eucharist and penance. For each sacrament, **Column I, "Introduction for Parents and Sponsors,"** describes the content for general instruction prior to the discernment process. **Column II, "Introduction for Candidates,"** describes the basic knowledge and information a candidate should possess when entering the discernment process. **Column III, "Discernment,"** lists points to be considered by all involved in the discernment process. Finally, **Column IV, "Immediate Catechesis,"** outlines the general content of immediate catechesis for parents and Godparents in infant baptism and for the candidates in the other sacraments. Parents and sponsors as the primary catechists should also be instructed on this content.



GUIDELINES FOR MENTAL PREPARATION

EUCCHARIST

PENANCE

<p>1. eucharist as the communal paschal mystery</p> <p>2. the connection between hearing, listening, sharing, etc.) and the mystery of faith</p> <p>3. the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist</p> <p>4. the communal nature of the Eucharist</p> <p>5. the Eucharist as a means of grace</p> <p>6. proper disposition for receiving the Eucharist</p> <p>7. how to celebrate in the Eucharist</p>	<p>1. desire of candidate to participate in the community's liturgy and receive Eucharist with some degree of regularity</p> <p>2. willingness of candidate to participate in process of immediate catechesis</p> <p>3. capacity to hear and respond to the Gospel stories of Jesus who loves and cares for us and who invites our friendship</p> <p>4. capacity to be aware of one's affiliation with the community through baptism</p> <p>5. ability to participate in Eucharistic celebration (e.g. simple responses, reverence, attention, etc.)</p> <p>6. ability to distinguish between ordinary bread and Eucharist</p>	<p>1. eucharist as the communal paschal mystery</p> <p>2. the connection between hearing, listening, sharing, etc.) and the mystery of faith</p> <p>3. the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist</p> <p>4. the communal nature of the Eucharist</p> <p>5. the Eucharist as a means of grace</p> <p>6. proper disposition for receiving the Eucharist</p> <p>7. how to celebrate in the Eucharist</p>	<p>1. God's loving purpose in the act of love</p> <p>2. the frailty of human nature and reconciliation</p> <p>3. personal and social sin</p> <p>4. the Gospel call to conversion</p> <p>5. the role of the Church in reconciliation</p> <p>6. how to examine one's conscience</p> <p>7. the elements of the Sacrament of Penance</p> <p>8. celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and an expression of faith</p>
<p>1. a general background and basic knowledge of the faith which is age appropriate may be assumed if candidate has successfully participated in the parish or school systematic learning component of the religious education program. For particulars, see "Systematic Learning," Part VII, Curriculum Outlines.</p> <p>2. information regarding the process and criteria for discerning readiness so that the candidate can enter into this process according to age and ability</p>	<p>1. Psychological readiness:</p> <p>a. the candidate's ability to reflect on his/her own attitudes and actions</p> <p>b. the candidate's ability to make appropriate choices, i.e., the capacity to make choices among options in simple matters, to understand when such a deliberate choice has been made and to distinguish between an intentional action and an accident</p> <p>2. Moral Readiness:</p> <p>a. the candidate's ability to know the difference between right and wrong, i.e., to know when one has made a loving or selfish choice</p> <p>b. the candidate's ability to take pride in or regret his/her own actions</p> <p>c. the candidate's ability to distinguish between "wrong" and "sin"</p> <p>d. the candidate's ability to make amends, i.e., the capacity to make up for one's hurtful actions and to resolve to change one's behavior</p> <p>3. Catechetical and Liturgical Readiness:</p> <p>a. the candidate's ability to understand church affiliation, i.e., belonging to a church community through Baptism</p> <p>b. the candidate's ability to relate to Jesus as one who forgives</p> <p>c. the candidate's capacity to understand and participate in the liturgical rite</p> <p>d. the candidate's expressed need to celebrate the</p>	<p>1. a general background and basic knowledge of the faith which is age appropriate may be assumed if candidate has successfully participated in the parish or school systematic learning component of the religious education program. For particulars, see "Systematic Learning," Part VII, Curriculum Outlines.</p> <p>2. information regarding the process and criteria for discerning readiness so that the candidate can enter into this process according to age and ability</p>	<p>1. God's loving purpose in the act of love</p> <p>2. the frailty of human nature and reconciliation</p> <p>3. personal and social sin</p> <p>4. the Gospel call to conversion</p> <p>5. the role of the Church in reconciliation</p> <p>6. how to examine one's conscience</p> <p>7. the elements of the Sacrament of Penance</p> <p>8. celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and an expression of faith</p>
<p>1. eucharist in the life of the community</p> <p>2. discerning readiness</p> <p>3. immediate catechesis and sacrament of initiation</p>	<p>1. a general background and basic knowledge of the faith which is age appropriate may be assumed if candidate has successfully participated in the parish or school systematic learning component of the religious education program. For particulars, see "Systematic Learning," Part VII, Curriculum Outlines.</p> <p>2. information regarding the process and criteria for discerning readiness so that the candidate can enter into this process according to age and ability</p>	<p>1. eucharist in the life of the community</p> <p>2. discerning readiness</p> <p>3. immediate catechesis and sacrament of initiation</p>	<p>1. God's loving purpose in the act of love</p> <p>2. the frailty of human nature and reconciliation</p> <p>3. personal and social sin</p> <p>4. the Gospel call to conversion</p> <p>5. the role of the Church in reconciliation</p> <p>6. how to examine one's conscience</p> <p>7. the elements of the Sacrament of Penance</p> <p>8. celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and an expression of faith</p>

GUIDELINES FOR MENTAL PREPARATION

BAPTISM

CONFIRMATION

ND SPONSORS	CANDIDATES	DOCUMENTATION	PARENTS, SPONSORS, & GODPARENTS
<p>Confirmation in the faith life</p> <p>Development of baptismal promises</p> <p>Immediate catechesis and development of the sacrament of confirmation</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> the desire of the parents to celebrate the sacrament the parents are prepared to profess the faith and to understand the duty of bringing up the child in the faith the parents are willing to be active members of the local faith community <p>Note: In the case of infants being presented for baptism, it is the parents or guardian who must demonstrate a proper disposition toward and readiness to assume the responsibility of educating the child in the way of faith of the church community by their word and example.</p>	<p>(Directed Toward Parents)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the church as a community of faith baptism as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a sacrament of faith a rebirth in water a cleansing from sin the establishment of the church with Christ a call to share in the mission of the church through the ministry of the priest, prophet, and apostle the pledge to bring up the child in the faith the form and symbols of the sacrament the local parish celebration
<p>Confirmation in the life of the church</p> <p>Development of confirmation promises</p> <p>Discerning readiness for confirmation</p> <p>Immediate catechesis and development of the sacrament of confirmation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a general background and basic knowledge of the faith which is age appropriate may be assumed if candidate has successfully participated in the parish or school systematic learning component of the religious education program. For particulars, see "Systematic Learning," Part VII, Curriculum Outlines. Information regarding the process and criteria for discerning readiness so that the candidate can enter into this process according to age and ability 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> the desire of the candidate to celebrate the sacrament the desire and ability of the candidate to ratify his/her baptismal promises the desire and ability of the candidate to respond to the Spirit's call to witness to the faith and build up the body of Christ a sense of Church and some experience of the local parish community a willingness on the part of the candidate to participate in the program of immediate catechesis 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> confirmation as a sacrament participation in the sacrament the role of the Holy Spirit as revealed through the gifts and fruits of the Spirit the evangelical call to witness to the faith the elements of the sacrament: the Word, the water, the oil, the laying on of hands, the anointing with chrism

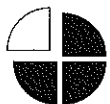
APPENDIX B

THE CONFIRMATION DEBATE

- #1 Christ's death and resurrection brought new life to the apostles. The coming of the Spirit enabled them to confess Jesus as Lord and empowered them to spread the good news of salvation. "And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." (Acts 3:47)

History

- #2 During the third and fourth centuries, concern for the integrity of the gospel in a time of persecution led to the development of a lengthy catechumenal process culminating in the celebration of the sacred mysteries during the Easter Vigil. During this vigil, catechumens professed their faith and were immersed in the waters of baptism. Clothed in new white garments, they were then presented to the bishop who confirmed them with a laying on of hands and anointing after which they took their places in the midst of the assembly and completed their initiation by sharing in the eucharist. During the Easter season, the neophytes spent time together reflecting on the paschal mystery which they had celebrated sacramentally.
- #3 Through this process, adult converts were able to come to the Lord and experience through the sacraments that salvation preached by the apostles. The rigors of the catechumenate tested the sincerity of the candidates and, along with the prayers and support of the community, strengthened them in their new faith. The distinctness of childhood was not a concern in ancient times. Infants and children were brought to the Easter sacraments by their parents.
- #4 With the end of persecution and the growth of the church, the catechumenate fell into disuse. In the east, the unity of the sacraments was preserved. Presbyters baptized, confirmed and admitted infants to eucharist. In the west, presbyters baptized infants, but bishops retained their prerogative to confirm. Distance and growing administrative concerns prevented the bishop from getting around his diocese to confirm. The completion of initiation — confirmation and eucharist — was delayed.
- #5 Later, it became normative to delay confirmation and eucharist until the age of discretion when children could ratify the profession of faith which had been made in their name. The age of discretion was variously interpreted and this, along with the problem of the availability of the bishop, led to the practice of confirmation at different ages over time.
- #6 In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council officially defined and set the number of sacraments at seven. Reflection on practice at that time and conciliar definitions contributed to the breakdown in the patristic understanding of the unity of the sacraments of initiation. In 1910, Pope Pius X lowered the age for the reception of first eucharist. In practice, this effectively reversed the order of the sacraments of initiation.
- #7 Vatican II called for the restoration of the catechumenate for adults. (SC #64) *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, introduced in the United States in 1974 and mandated in 1988, restores the order and the unity of the sacraments of initiation for adults. The RCIA also provides an adaptation for use in the Christian initiation of unbaptized children who have reached catechetical age and restores the order and unity of the sacraments of initiation for them.
- #8 Vatican II also called for the revision of the rite of baptism for infants and the rite of confirmation. The praenotanda to the 1969 *Rite of Baptism for Children*, the 1980 *Instruction on Infant Baptism*, and Canon #867 all call for the baptism of infants "within the first weeks after birth." Both the praenotanda to the 1971 *Rite of Confirmation* and Canon #891 postpone confirmation to the age of discretion or even later.



For pastoral reasons . . . to strengthen the faithful in complete obedience to Christ the Lord and in loyal testimony to him, episcopal conferences may choose an age which seems more appropriate, so that the sacrament is given at a more mature age after appropriate formation. (RC #11)

- #9 Thus, we have two distinct orders for the initiation of children. For those baptized in infancy, completion of initiation is postponed to at least the age of discretion. For those who have attained the use of reason and were not baptized in infancy, "what is prescribed . . . [for] an adult is applicable" (Canon #852), i.e., full initiation — baptism, confirmation, and eucharist — as prescribed in the RCIA. Furthermore, the "appropriate" age for confirmation is still a matter of discussion among U. S. bishops.

The Debate

- #10 Most who come to the question from a liturgical background argue for restoring the order of the sacraments of initiation to baptism, confirmation, and then eucharist. Some propose full initiation at infancy as is practiced in the east. Others maintain that confirmation should always precede first communion.

- #11 The renewed norms on Christian initiation and weight of papal teaching regarding confirmation preceding eucharist seem to point in their favor. The structure of the early catechumenate would become the experience of the whole church. Theological reflection on this practice would enhance our appreciation of the unity of the paschal mystery and the sacraments of initiation.

- #12 Those who come to the question from a pastoral background argue for confirmation sometime during adolescence. Some would even propose confirmation being delayed to young adulthood or whatever age an individual experiences a conversion of life. They see the development of the present practice as a result of the activity of the Spirit and the call from Vatican II for "full, conscious, and active participation."

. . . in order that the sacred liturgy may produce its full effect, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their thoughts match their words, and that they cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain. . . Pastors of souls must . . . ensure that the faithful take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully. (SC #11)

- #13 They argue that if the RCIA envisions a process of years for the preparation of adults for initiation, then a lengthy process for children is certainly in order. Moreover, full catechesis is an important concern in the RCIA. (RCIA #75, #78)

- #14 They point out that Vatican II and later catechetical congresses also encouraged pastors to draw on the human sciences and read the signs of the times. These sciences have demonstrated the distinctiveness of both childhood and adolescence. Confirmation may not be a rite of maturity, but initiation is indeed a rite of passage — from slavery to freedom and from death to new life. Therefore, they hold that sacramental practice must somehow be related to human experience. The current sacramental practice seems to reflect a process of initiation bracketed by baptism and confirmation. Seen in this light, then, confirmation is preserved as a sacrament of initiation and a rite of intensification which assists persons to assume responsibility for the Christian life and mission.

- #15 While liturgical proponents draw on the model of the classical catechumenate, others point out that the practice of initiation was varied during the period of the New Testament and has varied throughout history in the west. Evidence in the rituals themselves and in canon law allows much latitude and suggests that the question of the proper age for confirmation is not yet closed.

- #16 Related issues concern the understanding of the role of the bishop in confirmation, the sacramental character of confirmation, and eucharist as the completion of initiation.



PERSONNEL: PEOPLE WHO ARE RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS

I. INTRODUCTION

- #1 As the firstborn of many... and through the gift of his Spirit, [Jesus Christ] established, after his death and resurrection, a new... community composed of all those who receive him in faith and in love. This he did through his body, which is the Church. There everyone, as members one of the other, would render mutual service according to the different gifts bestowed on each. This solidarity must be constantly increased until that day on which it will be brought to fulfillment. (GS #32)
- #2 Before programs or policies, religious education is about people and their relationship with God. In a very real sense, guidelines about people involved in religious education affect every individual, family, and parish in the diocese of Worcester as they serve one another "according to the different gifts bestowed on each."
- #3 This handbook will consider briefly the basic rights and responsibilities of all members of the church. It will look at religious educators in terms of the roles they play and the expectations that the family, parish community, school of religion, and diocese have of them.

II. BASIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

- #4 We are made in the image and likeness of God and are called to share in God's life through Jesus in the Spirit. Hence equal dignity exists among all the people of God regarding both common rights and common obligations. (Canon #208)

A. COMMON RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

- #5 Each person possesses basic human rights to life, protection of reputation, to adjudication of rights, and to the protection of privacy.

Among the rights all Christians share are:

- the right to hear the Word of God and participate in the sacraments (Canon #213)
- the right to act in accordance with his or her own well formed conscience (DH #3)
- the right to speak and be heard concerning the pastoral needs and affairs of the church (Canon #212)
- the right to free assembly and association in the church (Canon #215, 216)
- the right to receive a religious education (Canon #217)

- #6 The church expresses the common obligations of all Christians in terms of call. This call invites every member to personal holiness, to work for justice, to evangelize and catechize by word and deed and to revere each and every person as the image of Christ.



B. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- #7 Since all have the sacred duty and inalienable right to a religious education, there are basic freedoms and responsibilities that apply. Each Christian has a serious obligation to pursue a lifetime of learning about the truth revealed in Jesus Christ and to form a conscience proper to his or her life situation. This includes freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression in the sacred sciences, and the right to seek advanced studies in the faith. (Canon #229) All age groups and those with special needs have an equal right to religious education appropriate to their age, abilities, and condition.
- #8 The mission of education belongs by a unique title to the church because it has the responsibility of speaking with authority as it teaches the truth which is Jesus Christ. Therefore, the church assumes a serious responsibility to offer to religious education significant resources in people, energy and material means. (GE #3)

III. PEOPLE WHO ARE RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS

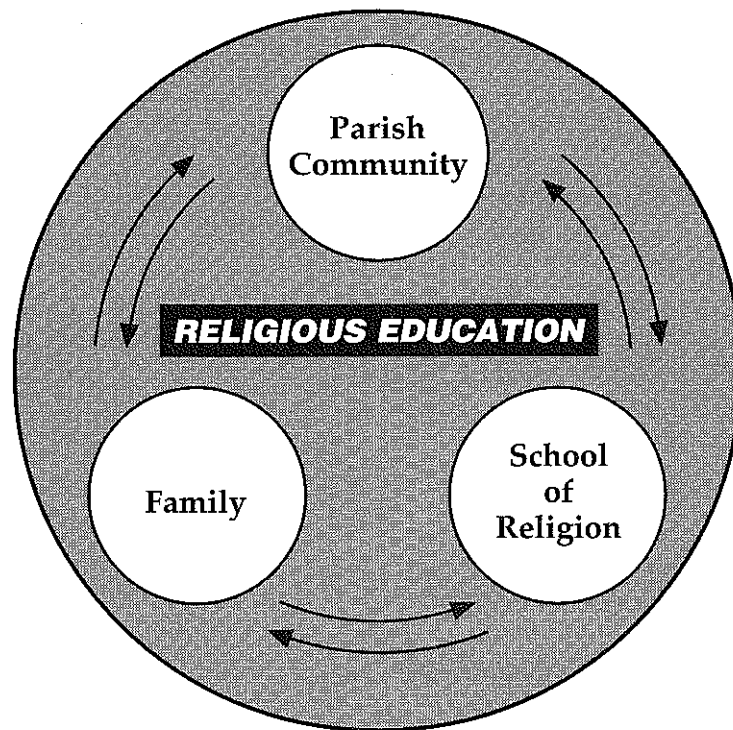
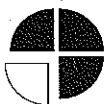


Diagram #1

- #9 The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to the ability of each. (LG #17)
- #10 All Christians, by reason of their baptism, participate in religious education. Parents and religion teachers catechize both intentionally and unintentionally by personal witness through word and example. Families, parish communities, and religious educators each enjoy a specific catechetical role. Descriptions follow.



A. FAMILIES

#11 Family can be defined as an "intimate community of persons bound together by blood, marriage, or adoption for the whole of life." (*Family Perspective*, p.8.) Indeed, this composes all of human-kind for all are connected with family in some way, beyond a particular household to ancestors, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws. (cf. "Christian Formation" #9-11)

#12 Families transmit both physical and spiritual life as they hand on values, traditions, and a way of being life-giving in every generation. They train each new generation in ways of social life, hospitality, and political activities.

The family shares in the life and mission of the Church by becoming a believing and evangelizing community, a community in dialogue with God, and a community at the service of humanity...family life is sacred and family activities are holy; the Christian family, as the church of the home, has a unique ministry.

(*Family Perspective*, pg. 21.)

The Family and The Parish Community

#13 Together, families make up the parish community. Each family exists as a first community of faith where basic moral values are taught and sacramental life and prayer are nourished. Through the family, members become involved in the parish community and model religious practice in their daily living. (cf. "Christian Formation" #12-15.)

The Family and Sacramental Catechesis

#14 Possessing both the responsibility and the joy of seeking the sacraments of the church for their children, families have the right and duty to participate in their own ongoing sacramental formation. Sacramental readiness of children occurs in great measure through the Christian formation that exists in the family and that is lived out in the context of the parish community. (cf. "Christian Formation Handbook" passim.) As families become involved in the parish community through service, worship, and expressing themselves about pastoral needs of the church, they become a sacramental sign to their community. (cf. #5.)

Families and the School of Religion

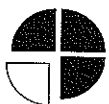
#15 Families have specific rights and responsibilities towards the school of religion and it in turn must inform parents and responsible guardians about the content of instruction for their children. For example, specific instruction about human sexuality needs to be done with the consultation and cooperation of parents. Rights of parents in this regard are inalienable. (NCD #191) Families support the school community by participating in ongoing religious education programs and modeling moral values taught by the school of religion.

The Family and the Diocese of Worcester

#16 Families relate to the larger praying, celebrating church as they listen and become informed about diocesan policies and programs. Supporting diocesan efforts in religious education, they involve themselves in ongoing programs and make their ideas and needs known to diocesan staff members. As they educate themselves toward a universal moral value system they embrace the global community with charity, compassion and justice.

Responsibilities of the Church to the Family

#17 Given its vision of family life as the basic foundation of church and society, the church welcomes all kinds of families. Inviting all to hear the Good News, it listens openly to the difficulties families experience today. By challenging negative trends and addressing issues that weaken families, the church develops a pastoral strategy helping families to move from crisis to growth and from stress to strength. (*Family Perspective*, pg. 7.)



#18

However, as in all areas of rights and responsibilities, the principle of subsidiarity must hold. The diocese should not do what the parish community can do better nor should the parish do for the home what it can do best for itself and the church. (*Family Perspective*, pg. 21.)

(For a full development of this, see: *Family Perspective in Church and Society*. (Washington, D.C. USCC, 1988)

B. THE PARISH COMMUNITY

#19

The parish is defined as a community of faith, the body of Christ present in a particular place. It is the parish community that makes God's love concrete. Here persons grow in faith, learn to pray, adopt a set of values, and live a life of Christian service and witness in the midst of a believing, praying, forgiving, celebrating, and serving community.

Parish and the Family

#20

Reflecting the moral values practiced in the home, the parish community supports and encourages parents in their teaching role. It models the communal dimension of the sacraments, provides catechists to sponsor others into fuller church life, and welcomes all regardless of race, nationality, social status, etc. Parish leadership provides for the systematic learning and Christian formation of all parishioners. Thus the entire parish is the people of God. Here differences in customs and language are recognized and carefully considered in designing programs and preparing celebrations.

Parish and the School of Religion

#21

The parish community establishes a school of religion (cf. "Principles" #7) organized to meet its wide variety of religious education needs: e.g. adult education, family and/or intergenerational learning programs, elementary and high school learning sessions. The community supports its religious education efforts by providing gifts of talent, expertise, and finances. The way the parish community celebrates its sacraments provides the school of religion with the context for sacramental catechesis. The parish community evangelizes and catechizes through its witness to the faith in word and in deed. Besides the parish board of religious education (cf. #25 ff.), the parish exercises its teaching role through the activities of boards and committees such as the parish council, the finance, liturgy, social action, family life, and the many other committees, boards and organizations in parish life.

Parish and Religious Educators

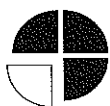
#22

A parish provides the organization and ongoing educational support for religious educators in its program. Spiritual experiences, teacher training, public commissioning ceremonies, are all ways to encourage and develop these persons.

Pastors

#23

The bishop extends his responsibility for carrying out the mission of Jesus and his church to pastors who in virtue of their office are bound to provide for the religious education of all parishioners by collaborating with responsible and qualified people to assist them. (Canon #776) Recognizing the family as a developing system and allowing for family diversity, pastors are called to form a partnership between families and the parish religious education program. (*Family Perspective* pp. 8-11.)



In accordance with the principles of the *National Catechetical Directory* (#217), pastors:

- participate in continuing education for themselves
- insure that the religious education needs, goals and priorities of the parish are identified, articulated and met
- encourage and support religion teachers and catechists
- direct the parish finance committee to fund the school of religion adequately
- speak and act in the name of the bishop on the local level
- support parishioners in their participation of diocesan sponsored religious education programs and events
- sponsor an awareness of the mission and place of the parish in the life of the universal church.

Parish Boards of Religious Education

#25

Each parish in the Diocese of Worcester is encouraged to have a functioning board of religious education whose members share the common responsibility for the total parish program with the pastoral leadership, i.e. pastors and DRE/CRE. An effective parish board of religious education is the logical and most reliable means of providing sound direction and stability to the religious education program within parishes. With pastoral support, such boards can insure the existence of a coherent, well-integrated religious education program which promotes orderly growth through long-term planning and realistic evaluation. (cf. "Principles" #15ff. and "Practical Helps")

#26

Cooperation and collaboration characterizes the relationship between this board and pastoral leadership. This board is an enduring parish structure which has publicly accepted a shared responsibility for systematic learning, Christian formation and the nurturing and encouragement of religious education personnel in the parish. (cf. "Personnel", "Systematic Learning" and "Christian Formation" Handbooks) The parish board of religious education advises parish leadership on major religious education policy decisions. Given its mission, the recommendations of the board are to receive serious consideration from the pastor and/or parish administrator and DRE/CRE. (cf. "Practical Helps")

C. SCHOOL OF RELIGION PERSONNEL

Religious Educators in the Parish Community

#27

Several persons and groups of persons are directly involved in the effective functioning of the school of religion. The "umbrella" name this document uses for all these persons is *religious educator*. Integral to an understanding of the religious educator is the idea of call. (cf. #6) For the teacher, call demands a response to God's invitation to partake in the educational ministry of the church. Although church documents use the term "catechist" to apply to all from professors to those who share faith in a most informal way, the Office of Religious Education makes some distinctions.

Religion Teachers in Parish Communities

#28

As religion teachers, persons develop and exercise their gifts in the service of the parish community's **systematic learning** efforts. To be effective in their ministry they need to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to communicate the gospel message, foster community, and educate for service to the Christian and global community. (NCD #205-210)

#29

Among this group are included parish elementary and high school teachers, grade level coordinators, and adult education coordinators. The right to these titles is based on their being certified at the diocesan level. (cf. #48ff.)



Religion Teachers in Catholic Schools

- #30 Religion teachers in Catholic schools provide a systematic learning experience for those young persons attending the Catholic schools of the diocese. These teachers are expected to possess the same personal qualities as religion teachers in parish communities. School administrators foster personal and professional growth among their teachers through opportunities for intellectual and spiritual enrichment. Religion teachers in Catholic schools are also certified to teach religion through the diocesan office. (cf. #48ff.)

Ministers of Christian Formation

- #31 Catechists functioning as ministers in Christian formation programs, fulfill their role by sponsoring others into fuller church life. To be effective in their ministry they need sufficient training in methods of spiritual formation, prayer, liturgy, and retreats to nurture growth in faith. Among those who serve are members of an RCIA team, a baptismal team, those who do sacramental preparation, and youth ministers. These persons earn the right to their titles based on specific training. (cf. #48 ff.)
- #32 Defined separately in terms of roles, nevertheless religion teachers and ministers of Christian formation are often the same person. There are times that catechists are heavily involved in teaching systematically and times religion teachers are called to be involved in faith formation. But clarity of role enables the religious educator to focus more precisely on instruction or formation in a given situation.

Leaders in the School of Religion

- #33 Certain persons assume professional or para-professional leadership positions in the parish school of religion. These are salaried persons who by virtue of their academic preparation and professional experience have been certified through the diocesan Office of Religious Education and have been called to service by the parish community.
- #34 **1. Parishes of the Diocese of Worcester are encouraged to employ professional religious educators certified by the diocesan office to work in collaboration with pastoral leadership. Specific spiritual, professional, and financial support for such persons is to be provided by local parishes. (See Canon #231)**
- #35 2. The parish Director of Religious Education (DRE) is a person who, due to the level of competency attained in the areas of theology and religious education, is responsible for the design, implementation, administration, and evaluation of the total parish religious education program. The DRE is accountable to the pastor for the exercise of this ministry. This is a salaried professional position.
- #36 3. The parish Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) is a person who accepts responsibility for organizing, implementing and evaluating a part, or all of the parish religious education program. This ministry is exercised under the guidance and supervision of the pastor or the parish director of religious education. This is a salaried professional position.
- #37 4. The parish Administrator of Religious Education (ARE) is a para-professional religious educator who, under the direction of the pastor, religious education board, or DRE, organizes particular areas of the religious education program and consults with appropriate resource people as necessary. This is a salaried position.



#38

5. In parishes where a certified DRE, CRE, or ARE is not present, the Office of Religious Education tries to channel necessary program information through a parish contact person. This procedure was adopted to improve communication. It does not imply any kind of official diocesan recognition/certification of the parish contact person. **The office of religious education is committed to do all within its ability to certify these persons. In addition, the parish is urged to regard their training and certification as a priority.**

Profile of Leadership Persons in the School of Religion

#39

Charts detailing the process for certification of DRE's, CRE's and ARE'S and listings of their expected qualifications and range of responsibilities may be found in "Appendix A" of this handbook. It is important not to expect persons to perform at a level beyond that for which they are certified and qualified.

Hiring Process for Leadership Persons

#40

Before beginning to search for a leadership person in Religious Education, a parish needs to perform several tasks. The Office of Religious Education has prepared a hiring packet to facilitate this process. It may be found in "Practical Helps."

Religious Education Personnel Board

#41

The personnel board was created by the diocesan Office of Religious Education to assist parishes in their search for qualified coordinators and directors of religious education. Members are appointed by the diocesan Director of Religious Education. Membership is drawn from the diocesan staff, parish directors of religious education and persons who have pastoral experience in the ministry of religious education. The board acts in an advisory capacity to the diocesan Director.

#42

The board exercises its function by reviewing the qualifications of persons applying to be certified as coordinator or director. It interviews the applicants and makes recommendations based on this interview. The consensus of the board regarding the professional capability of the candidates interviewed forms the basis for the director's recommendation to certify the candidates. The diocesan office recommends that only certified coordinators and directors be hired by parishes.

D. DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP

The Residential Bishop

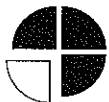
#43

The bishop is the reference point for the local church who looks to him for inspiration, spiritually sound teaching, and leadership in issues of justice and peace. The bishop, as chief pastor and teacher in the diocese, promotes the right of all persons to ongoing religious education. In the diocese of Worcester, the bishop augments this ministry through the Office of Religious Education. The bishop is the most clear and visible link between the diocese and the universal church.

Vicar for Education

#44

Appointed by the residential bishop, the Vicar serves as a member of the bishop's cabinet and represents the bishop on the diocesan Board of Education in order to facilitate and coordinate all diocesan educational services. The Vicar provides a vision for the educational thrust of the diocese, monitors the budgets of the School Department, Religious Education Office, Youth Ministry and Campus Ministry and acts as liaison among the departments and with the bishop.



Diocesan Board of Education

- #45 A diocesan Board of Education moderated by the Vicar for Education, has been established to insure communication, cooperation, and common goals within the educational apostolate. Members include the Vicar for Education, the Superintendent of Diocesan Schools, the Diocesan Director of Religious Education, the Vicar for Campus Ministry, the Director of Youth Ministry and appointed members of the diocesan community.

The Office of Religious Education

- #46 The Office of Religious Education is the means the bishop uses to direct and serve all of the religious education activities of the diocese. To help people recognize their baptismal call to know, live and share the Gospel message, the Office of Religious Education has set the following goals:

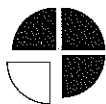
- to insure quality religious education programs in parishes through technical and pastoral assistance
- to advocate with diocesan, parish and school leadership for quality religious education for everyone
- to provide and promote quality resources to be used in religious education
- to provide for the formation of effective religious educators

- #47 The Director and Associate Directors of Religious Education work together in pursuit of the vision and goals of the Office of Religious Education. They are persons of knowledge, competence and faith who function as consultants and resource persons in dialogue with religious educators in parish communities and Catholic schools, and with personnel in diocesan, regional and national offices. (NCD #218)

IV. FORMATION AND CERTIFICATION OF RELIGION TEACHERS AND CATECHISTS

- #48 ***In order to insure that public teaching is faithful to our heritage as Catholic Christians and effectively communicated to others, all religion teachers and catechists are to be certified through the completion of appropriate training programs. Competencies needed for effective teaching include:***

- solid grasp of Catholic doctrine and worship
 - familiarity with scripture
 - communication skills
 - ability to use various teaching methods
 - understanding of how people grow, mature, and learn.
- (NCD #211)



A. RESPONSIBLE AGENTS

- #49 The task of training religious educators and helping them develop qualities appropriate for their ministry is shared by the Diocesan Office of Religious Education, parishes, and schools.

Office of Religious Education

- #50 The Office of Religious Education is the certifying agency for religious educators in the Diocese of Worcester. It assists and encourages parishes and schools by organizing instruction courses for their religious educators. The office gives approved courses through the *Collaborative for Education and Ministry* and provides a syllabus of course content available for DRE's to use in giving courses in a local parish setting. Video courses and training for facilitators are available. The diocesan Office of Religious Education will record all certification granted.

Parish DRE/CRE

- #51 One of the primary responsibilities of a parish DRE or CRE is the recruitment and training of religious educators. By insuring that certification is a requirement for every parish religion teacher/catechist, parish leadership renders teachers more secure, confident and competent. The records of courses completed by religious educators are kept in the parish and by the catechists/teachers. (cf. "Principles" #21.)

Catholic Schools

- #52 Religious educators in Catholic elementary schools obtain certification proper to their needs as professional school teachers. Records of courses completed are kept by the individual and in the Catholic School Department.

Collaborative for Education & Ministry

- #53 The *Collaborative for Education and Ministry* is an organization of directors of departments in the Diocese of Worcester who work together to spread the Gospel by preparing people for Catholic Christian ministry. In order to unify this effort, the organization sponsors courses and workshops in both theological enrichment and training in a specific field of pastoral ministry.

B. CERTIFICATION PROCESS*

#54 The fundamental task of the religious educator is to proclaim the message of Christ. All religious educators ought to deepen their understanding of the Christian message of divine revelation and continually develop and improve skills in teaching methods to communicate this message effectively.

Provisional Certification

- #55 ***Provisional certification for parish religious educators is considered a minimum requirement to exercise this ministry.***

Provisional certification includes one survey course on Catholic belief and additional entry level course(s) pertinent to a specific ministry.

- #55 Provisional certification for parish religion teachers consists of two components:

1. INTRODUCTION TO CREED: a survey course based on "Faith Professed" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
2. INTRODUCTION TO THE MINISTRY OF THE PARISH RELIGION TEACHER/CATECHIST: a basic course designed to equip religion teachers with the fundamental skills needed to begin teaching.

*A summary chart of diocesan requirements may be found in "Practical Helps."



#57 Provisional certification for religious educators in **Catholic elementary schools** consists of a two part program:

1. INTRODUCTION TO CREED: a survey course based on "Faith Professed" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
2. INTRODUCTION TO THE MINISTRY OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHER: Workshops designed to familiarize the professional school teacher with the insights and specialized methods essential to the teaching of religion in a Catholic school context.

#58 Provisional certification for **sacramental catechists** consists of three components:

1. INTRODUCTION TO CREED: a survey course based on "Faith Professed" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
2. INTRODUCTION TO SACRAMENTS AND WORSHIP: a survey course based on "Faith Celebrated" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
3. INTRODUCTION TO THE MINISTRY OF PARISH CATECHIST: a basic methods course designed to equip catechists with the fundamental skills needed to begin teaching. (Some ministries such as catechesis with parents on infant baptism are better served by a **team approach**. Appropriate introduction to team ministry is included for these groups. For a full development of certification for an **RCIA Team** see: *Journey in Faith: Guidelines for R.C.I.A., revised edition, 1993.*)

#59

Certification

Following provisional certification, religion teachers and catechists continue to pursue additional courses in doctrine, sacraments and liturgy, and advanced techniques and methods. Those serving in other areas of Christian formation and ministry continue to pursue knowledge, understanding of prayer and spirituality, and ways to sponsor others into fuller church life.

#60

To achieve certification it is necessary to complete the following courses:

1. INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE: an overview of Sacred Scripture, exploring what the Bible is and how it became to be.
2. INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH HISTORY: an exploration of our Catholic heritage from its beginning to post Vatican II.
3. INTRODUCTION TO MORALITY: a survey course based on "Faith Lived" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
4. INTRODUCTION TO SACRAMENTS AND WORSHIP: a survey course based on "Faith Celebrated" of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

REQUIRED COURSES FOR CERTIFICATION MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN A REASONABLE LENGTH OF TIME.

#61

In addition to the *Collaborative for Education and Ministry*, certification may be completed by an approved video series, or equivalency credit may be given for previous or current academic work.

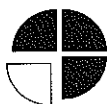
#62

Upon completion of all courses and the acceptance of the corresponding evaluation, certification will be granted by the Office of Religious Education.

#63

Certification for Catholic High School Teachers of Religion

Religion teaching on the high school level is a specialized field. Therefore, when applying for a position within the diocesan school system, applicants must demonstrate that they have completed either a major in the field, or have accumulated sufficient credits in theology or religious education to qualify for this position. Certification is achieved through attainment of a masters degree in religious education, religious studies or its equivalent. Every three years, a high school religion teacher is required to pursue a religious studies or theology course. The religious education office collaborates with the school department in the hiring of religion teachers.



Partnership for Religious Education

Sponsored jointly by the Diocese of Worcester and Assumption College, the Partnership provides an opportunity for qualified candidates to earn a Master of Arts in Religious Education and thus prepare for leadership roles in parish religious education and secondary school teaching. Application is made through the Office of Religious Education and the Graduate Department of Theology at Assumption College.

Certification Maintenance

All religious educators model life-long study and updating. Religious educators maintain certification by earning Continuing Education Units (CEU's)* as follows:

- **Parish religion teachers, Catholic elementary school teachers, and sacramental catechists** earn one CEU every two years.
- **Catholic high school religion teachers** take one graduate course in theology or religious studies every three years.
- **Directors, Coordinators, and Administrators of Religious Education** earn two CEU's every three years.
- * One CEU = 10 contact hours

V. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The dignity of the person and principles of fundamental justice demand the adequate protection of human rights and their prompt restoration when violated within the church. In order to protect these rights and to bring to accountability those charged with specific responsibilities, there are certain processes that are available.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

There are several important principles that Christians use to deal with pastoral conflict situations.

1. **Conciliation and Compassion:** Forgiveness, peacemaking and charity is the primary focus for reconciling differences. The assertion of legal rights come as a last resort.

2. **Subsidiarity:** Disputes are handled first by those most intimately involved. Only after all channels of personal and local conciliation have been exhausted are higher authorities to be involved.

3. **Explicit Expectations:** Guidelines, procedures and regulations which affect peoples' lives are clearly written down and communicated to all concerned. Many conflicts emerge because of poor communication and ambiguous expectations.

4. **Information on Rights and Procedures:** People need to be clearly informed of their rights within the church and the available procedures for the solution of grievances. The Tribunal for the Diocese of Worcester has developed procedures for conflict resolution in religious education. These procedures may be found in "Appendix B" of this handbook.

VI. CONCLUSION

The mission statement of the diocese speaks of "reaching out to all" and accepting "the Gospel challenge...to bring one another to a deeper knowledge and love of God." Working together through the school of religion, the parish community, and the family, all the people of the diocese can build an interdependent network of support and educational pursuit which will rise up to the glory of God.



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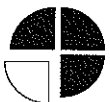
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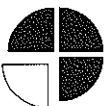


APPENDIX A

PROFILE OF LEADERSHIP PERSONS IN THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION

QUALIFICATIONS		
Director An understanding of religious education as a ministry devoted to quality, life-long continuing education A commitment to personal continuing education in theology and methodology Familiarity with and ability to use professional management skills A familiarity with appropriate resources for determining educational needs An understanding of the elements necessary for determining long-term curriculum development Familiarity with tools for program evaluation and openness to use same	Coordinator A thorough understanding of and commitment to the ministry of religious education A commitment to personal continuing education in theology and methodology Familiarity with and ability to use professional management skills	Administrator A commitment to the church and its educational ministry A commitment to personal continuing education in theology and methodology Possesses office management skills

CERTIFICATION		
Director <i>Certified by:</i> Completion of a master's degree in religious education or a comparable master's degree with equivalent religious education courses A demonstrated ability to function effectively as a director of a total parish religious education program At least five years teaching experience on a variety of grade levels Completion of application form, three current letters of recommendation and college transcripts Religious Education Personnel Board interview followed by a letter of acceptance/certification based upon Personnel Board approval or equivalent certification from another diocese	Coordinator <i>Certified by:</i> Completion of a bachelor's degree from a recognized college or university (including studies in theology and religious education) A proven ability to function effectively in a parish religious education program At least three years teaching experience Completion of application form, three current letters of recommendation and college transcripts Religious Education Personnel Board interview followed by a letter of acceptance/certification based upon Personnel Board approval or equivalent certification from another diocese	Administrator <i>Certified by:</i> At least a high school diploma and the completion of a program of training for Administrators of Religious Education approved by the Office of Religious Education At least three years experience in parish religious education programs, demonstrated administrative and interpersonal skills and a grasp of sound Catholic doctrine



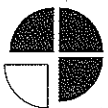
B.***APPROPRIATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

ARTICULATE VISION WITHIN THE PARISH COMMUNITY		
Director Select for parish study sources in church documents, Scripture, catechetical documents Identify challenges and opportunities in the culture and environment Assess needs Set priorities and demonstrate their relevance Develop religious education mission statement Set goals and objectives and establish plan of action	Coordinator Study sources in church documents, Scripture, catechetical documents Set Priorities Set and accomplish goals and objectives	Administrator

COMMUNICATE/COOPERATE WITH ALL PARISH MINISTERS AND STAFF		
Director Seek information from other ministers and staff Disseminate information to ministers and staff Provide for conflict resolution Serve as resource for other ministers Support other parish ministers and staff Participate in meetings of staff, parish council, religious education board	Coordinator Seek information from other ministers and staff Disseminate information to ministers and staff Provide for conflict resolution Serve as resource for other ministers Support other parish ministers and staff Participate in meetings of staff, parish council, religious education board	Administrator Seek information from other ministers and staff Disseminate information to ministers and staff Seek assistance in resolving conflict Is available to provide basic information regarding the program Act under direction of DRE Communicate and meet regularly with the DRE and parish staff and attend parish council and religious education board meetings

PLAN CURRICULUM		
Director Assess learners' needs Exercise sensitivity to family circumstances of learners Employ diocesan guidelines Incorporate prayer, service, and outreach at all levels Integrate the whole of church teaching throughout the curriculum Establish long-term goals Review resources Design/select program materials	Coordinator Assess learners' needs Exercise sensitivity to family circumstances of learners Employ diocesan guidelines Incorporate prayer, service, and outreach at all levels Review resources Select program materials	Administrator Exercise sensitivity to family circumstances of learners Employ diocesan guidelines Implement prayer, service, and outreach at all levels

* These duties and tasks are not offered as a job description. Each parish determines tasks and duties according to parish needs and personnel.



Personnel

C.**ADMINISTER PROGRAMS**

Director	Coordinator	Administrator
Set a program schedule	Set a program schedule	Set a program schedule
Coordinate calendar and facilities	Coordinate calendar and facilities	Coordinate calendar and facilities
Establish program procedures	Establish program procedures	Follow program procedures
Assign religion teachers and other volunteers	Assign religion teachers and other volunteers	Assign volunteer aides
Set and enforce facilities' guidelines	Set and enforce facilities' guidelines	Enforce facilities' guidelines
Ensure safe environment for learners	Ensure safe environment for learners	Provide for safe environment for learners
Provides for the carrying out of the following:		
Order program materials	Order program materials	Order program materials
Publicize program	Publicize program	Publicize program
Register participants	Register participants	Register participants
Collect fees	Collect fees	Collect fees
Prepare class lists	Prepare class lists	Type class lists
Provide program materials	Provide program materials	Distribute program materials
Provide for classroom set-up	Provide for classroom set-up	Provide for classroom set-up
Keep attendance records	Keep attendance records	Keep attendance records
Keep sacramental records	Keep sacramental records	Keep sacramental records

ADMINISTER THE BUDGET

Director	Coordinator	Administrator
Forecast income and expenses	Forecast expenses	Forecast expenses
Prepare the budget	Prepare the budget	
Defend the budget	Defend the operating budget	
Assist in setting fees		
Approve and code disbursements	Request and code disbursements	Code disbursements
Monitor the budget	Monitor the budget	



D.**RECRUIT AND FORM CATECHISTS**

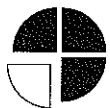
Director Search out prospects Build community Explain the roles and duties of catechists Train or provide for training of catechists Provide opportunities for ongoing faith development of catechists Establish a support system for catechists	Coordinator Search out prospects Build community Explain the roles and duties of catechists Provide for training of catechists Provide opportunities for ongoing faith development of catechists Establish a support system for catechists	Administrator Search out prospects Build community Arrange for training of catechists Arrange for opportunities for ongoing faith development of catechists Establish a support system for catechists
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MANAGE STAFF

Director Help to establish job description Establish office procedures Supervise assignments Encourage volunteers and staff Encourage professional development Conduct regular staff meetings Seek input from staff Manage personnel records Inform staff of legal responsibilities and protection	Coordinator Establish office procedures Supervise assignments Encourage volunteers and staff Encourage professional development Conduct regular staff meetings Seek input from staff	Administrator Carry out efficient office procedures Encourage volunteers
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EMPOWER PEOPLE

Director Affirm and nurture the gifts of others Seek leaders from the marginalized Evangelize Invite others to prayer and worship Invite others to community Invite others to study Invite others to service and outreach Remove barriers to full participation	Coordinator Affirm and nurture the gifts of others Seek leaders from the marginalized Evangelize Invite others to prayer and worship Invite others to community Invite others to study Invite others to service and outreach	Administrator Affirm the gifts of others Evangelize Invite others to prayer and worship Invite others to community Invite others to study Invite others to service and outreach
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E.

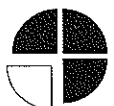
EVALUATE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Director	Coordinator	Administrator
Design evaluation instruments	Utilize evaluation procedures	Utilize evaluation procedures
Observe performances of catechists and staff	Observe performances of catechists and staff	
Observe learners' responses	Observe learners' responses	Observe learners' responses
Confer individually with catechists and staff	Confer individually with catechists and staff	
Recommend growth plan	Recommend growth plan	
Solicit input from parents, pastors, learners, catechists, and staff	Solicit input from parents, pastors, learners, catechists, and staff	Solicit input from parents, pastors, learners, catechists, and staff
Measure program results against goals	Measure program results against goals	
Account to pastor/parish	Account to pastor/parish	Account to DRE/pastor/parish

PURSUE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Director	Coordinator	Administrator
Develop professional growth plan	Identify professional growth plan	Identify professional growth plan
Maintain personal time	Maintain personal time	Maintain personal time
Nourish spiritual life	Nourish spiritual life	Nourish spiritual life
Maintain membership in professional organizations	Maintain membership in professional organizations	Maintain membership in professional organizations
Network with other professional religious educators	Network with other professional religious educators	Network with other professional and para-professional religious educators
Read current literature in the field	Read current literature in the field	Read current popular literature in the field
	Attend workshops/seminars/conferences	Attend workshops/seminars/conferences

Adapted from "Duties and Tasks of the DRE," *DRE Yesterday Today Tomorrow* National Association of Parish Coordinators/Directors of Religious Education, National Catholic Education Association and the National Conference of Diocesan Directors © 1990. Used with permission.



APPENDIX B

PROCEDURES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- #1 Situations that are concerned with the vindication of rights, strictly speaking, (i.e., to be godparent, to have a child baptized, to be confirmed, etc.), are not a matter of arbitration, conciliation, or mediation, but a matter of strict justice. Rights such as these are ecclesial rights and consequently the responsibilities they entail are necessarily determined by church authority.

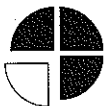
A. POLICY AND PERSONNEL DISPUTES

- #2 In disputes concerning policy or personnel the following procedures are used:
- #3 1. An aggrieved person approaches the other party directly in Christian charity, and attempts to resolve the differences.
 - #4 2. If this fails the help of a mutually trusted third party is sought to help bring about a reconciliation.
 - #5 3. When such personal reconciliation is not effective, those persons in the parish officially charged with religious education are asked to mediate. These persons have the responsibility to intervene even if not requested. The pastor is the final local arbitrator of such conflict.
 - #6 4. In those cases where an aggrieved party is not reconciled through the mediation of the pastor, a formal written complaint may be made to the director of the Office of Religious Education. The complaint details the point at issue and the means that have been used to reconcile the difference.
 - #7 The director will then notify the other party in the conflict of the nature of the complaint and request a written response detailing the other's point of view. After receiving these written presentations the director will contact each party personally to request further information for clarification and to present possible means for solution.
 - #8 If this initial mediation is unsuccessful, both parties will be asked to meet with the director at the Office of Religious Education. Each party will be interviewed personally by the director prior to a joint meeting between both parties. If the director is unsuccessful in mediating the conflict and the aggrieved party wishes to pursue the matter, the director will inform the aggrieved of the rights of formal due process within the Diocese of Worcester.
 - #9 The aggrieved will be given a list of the names, addresses and phone numbers of the current members of the diocesan Board of Mediation and Arbitration. The director shall also prepare a written report detailing the proceedings up to this point and submit this report to the diocesan bishop and the chair of the arbitration board. This report may also be used in any further due process proceedings.



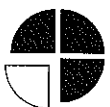
B. DUE PROCESS

- #9 A Board of Mediation and Arbitration has been established in the diocese to deal with disputes related to the exercise of office and authority in the church of Worcester. The following procedure will be followed in the use of this process:
- #10 1. The first step in the solution of any problem is a direct approach by the aggrieved party to the other party in Christian charity.
- #11 2. Any person (priest, religious, or lay) having a grievance against another arising from the exercise of office of position in the church may approach the chair of the Board of Mediation and Arbitration and present such grievance in writing, setting forth the nature of the complaint.
- #12 a. If the chair decides that the matter should be considered, he/she can and should endeavor to use his/her good offices informally to mediate the difference or seek an alleviation of the problem. If such informal mediation is deemed inadvisable, redundant or ineffective, the chair shall set up a panel of three members, including the Board initially approached.
- #13 b. If the chair decides that the matter should not be considered, he/she shall so advise the complainant.
- #14 3. The chairperson shall be empowered to establish, according to a prepared schema, three person panels in the cases envisioned in 2a and 2b above.
- #15 a. If the dispute is between two priests, the panel shall consist of three priests; if between a lay person and a priest, the panel shall include at least one lay person and one priest; if between a religious and a priest, at least one religious and one priest; if between two lay persons, at least two lay persons; if between two religious, at least two religious.
- #16 b. Either party may take exception to any member of the panel according to the norms of ecclesiastical law. A limited number of peremptory challenges shall be allowed each party. This will be determined by the chair.
- #17 c. Any member of the board may disqualify himself/herself from a particular case for a reasonable cause.
- #18 d. The panel shall endeavor to hear both parties to the dispute and mediate a solution acceptable to both parties.
- #19 e. The panel may admit additional witnesses at its discretion.
- #20 f. If, in the judgement of the panel, all efforts at mediation have failed, they shall so report to the chairperson.
- #21 4. Upon receiving official notification of the failure of mediation, the chairperson shall appoint three arbitrators to the case.
- #22 a. The arbitrators shall endeavor to ascertain the facts by hearing both parties, witnesses presented by the parties, and witnesses called by the arbitrators.
- #23 b. The findings of the arbitrators are communicated to both parties and shall be binding upon them.



C. SUMMARY

When the qualities of true wisdom, peacefulness, gentleness, friendliness and compassion are evident, especially in those in leadership, most pastoral problems can be solved readily. The recourse to legal procedures should be the exception. However, it is important that complainants become aware of the availability of such procedures and that they be informed of their proper use.



PRACTICAL HELPS

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SYSTEMATIC LEARNING and CHRISTIAN FORMATION

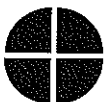
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CANONS PERTAINING TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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PRINCIPLES

FORMULATING GOALS

#1 The following procedure is one way of formulating goals:

1. List the priorities which have been identified.
2. Write out a goal statement for each item in measurable, achievable terms.
3. List goals in order of priority.
4. Separate goals into short-term and long-range.

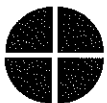
#2 **Long-range goals** by their very nature are challenging and require a certain level of commitment on the part of the people involved. They are not likely to be achieved in one year's time. An example of a long-range goal might be:

"That all teachers in the religious education program will be fully trained and certified."

#3 **Short-term goals** are those which may be accomplished within one academic year. For example, a short-term goal for the long-range goal mentioned above might be:

"Contact a diocesan consultant regarding teacher training."

#4 Together with the religious education board, parish leadership develops and implements an effective method of monitoring and evaluating both short-term and long-range goals. (cf. "Principles" #15ff.)



DESCRIPTION OF PREP:

Parish Religious Education, Evaluation and Planning

#1 PREP provides a process which attempts to help parishes describe their educational programs, identify areas of strength, and target crucial areas for future development.

#2 Parish leadership gathers interested persons for a three-hour process of responsible reflection on the parish religious education program.

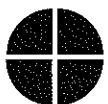
#3 At the parish meeting, the planning process begins in small groups where diocesan staff members invite participants to reflect on and speak of their understanding of religious education. Using an opinion sheet as a tool, participants record their idea of what constitutes an effective parish program. After this activity, the group expresses their expectations for the parish program by using a display wheel to record their view of the present effectiveness of various program components.

#4 In each instance attention is focused on four areas:

- parish organizational context
- systematic learning for youngsters
- adult learning
- Christian formation

Persons respond to stated categories within each of these major headings. Provision is made for the inclusion of additional categories by participants. After the individual responses are tabulated and graphed, parishioners see depicted before them their parish religious education program as they think it should be and as it currently exists.

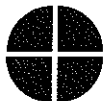
#5 The second part of the process occurs within a town meeting format. Participants comment, clarify, brainstorm and prioritize specific areas. Several of the crucial areas are then targeted for discussion within small interest groups. A volunteer secretary records recommendations to be reported to the larger group and identifies resources for implementation. The names of participants who volunteer to assume responsibility for follow-through on the recommendations and the name of a diocesan staff resource person for each of the follow-up areas are included in the report. The secretary's notes become a major portion of the formal report. The parish receives the original report. A copy of the report is retained in the diocesan file for the parish. (cf. "Principles" #23-24).



NCEA ASSESSMENT TOOL

#1

A series of assessment programs entitled "ACRE" has been developed by the National Catholic Educational Association as an evaluation tool. ACRE is a multi-level instrument designed to assess the effectiveness of parish programs at different levels. Designed much like a survey, ACRE gathers information from students about their religious knowledge, attitudes and practices. The feedback reported for each level is used to measure program effectiveness rather than individual achievement. These surveys can be administered at any time during the year. ACRE is available through the National Catholic Educational Association, 1077 30th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007-3852 (202 337-6232). (cf. "Principles" #24.)





SYSTEMATIC LEARNING AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION

DEVELOPMENTAL TABLES¹

The following tables provide outline sketches for some of the major theories describing human behavior and development.

ERIK ERIKSON - DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

Infancy (0-1 1/2)	Basic Trust vs. Mistrust (Hope)
Early Childhood (2-6)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (Will)
Childhood (7-12)	Initiative vs. Guilt (Purpose)
Adolescence (13-21)	Industry vs. Inferiority (Competency)
Young Adulthood (21-35)	Identity vs. Role Confusion (Fidelity)
Adulthood (35-60)	Intimacy vs. Isolation (Love)
Maturity (60—)	Generativity vs. Stagnation (Care)
	Integrity vs. Despair (Wisdom)

JEAN PIAGET - COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Sensorimotor period.

0-2 yrs. Infant learns that he/she is essentially different from other objects. Seeks out and needs a great deal of stimulation. Primitive understanding of causality, time, and space begins.

Preoperational period:

1. Preoperational phase:

2-4 yrs. Develops symbolic thinking, though in very concrete terms, e.g., using a stick as a "gun" in play. Child is still essentially egocentric, unable to understand things other than from own point of view. Simple language begins.

2. Intuitive phase:

4-7 yrs. Can think in terms of simple classes, e.g., children = boys + girls. Develops some number concepts and can understand simple relationships. Remains unable to reflect or examine own thinking, i.e., is "intuitive".

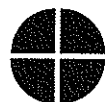
Concrete-operational period:

7-11 yrs. Can "conserve" mass, length, weight, volume, i.e., will understand when these remain constant despite a change in appearance of the object. Thinking becomes more fully and consistently logical. Develops abilities of classification (putting objects into classes and hierarchies of classes) and sensation (putting objects into an ordered series). Thinking is more flexible, less egocentric.

Formal-operational period:

11-15 yrs. Child develops ability to think with the greatest abstractness, flexibility, and complexity. Can, for example, consider a large number of alternatives in attempting to solve a problem, can consider purely speculative notions.

¹cf. "Systematic Learning" #11-13 and "Christian Formation" #10



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LAWRENCE KOHLBERG — DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL REASONING¹

Preconventional Level: Child responds to rules in terms of the various consequences of action.

Stage 1. Punishment and obedience orientation:

Morality is entirely external; it has nothing to do with intention or desire. Deference to the power of other people is the underlying reason for morality. The child's main clue to the rightness or wrongness of an action is whether or not he/she is punished.

Stage 2. Naively egoistic orientation:

Something is good because it satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Persons, rules, or actions are the instruments for one's own pleasure.

Conventional Level: Conformity to authority becomes significant.

Stage 3. Good boy, nice girl orientation:

Behavior is good which pleases or helps others and is approved by these others. Morality of conformity. Children understand rules and see them as helpful. Intention now enters into morality. They earn approval by being nice.

Stage 4. Law and order orientation:

Behavior must maintain good order in society.

Post-Conventional Level: Morality of rights and principles.

Stage 5. Social-contract legalistic orientation:

Right actions are defined in terms of general individual rights and in terms of standards developed by a society. When legal and individual rights come into conflict, individual rights must accede to the majority will as expressed in the constitutions and laws of the state.

Stage 6. Orientation to universal moral principles:

The moral appeal is made to a higher law of conscience or to a divine law which transcends custom and the laws of society.

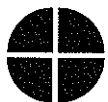
JAMES FOWLER - STAGES OF FAITH

Primal Faith: A pre-language disposition and emotional orientation of trust off-setting mistrust which happens in the context of one's relationships with family and others.

Intuitive-Projective Faith: In early childhood, before the age of reason, the imagination, stimulated by stories, gestures, and symbols, combines with perception and feeling to create long-lasting images of faith.

Mythic-Literal Faith: During elementary school years, the child begins to reason and is able to sort out the real from make-believe, the actual from fantasy. Important to moral development is the growing ability to enter into the perspectives of others.

¹Carol Gilligan, among others, has indicated that in the responses women and girls give to Kohlberg's moral dilemmas, the process of moral decision making is based primarily on a concern for human relationships. An ethic of caring enjoys an independent place equal to that of the ethic of justice.



Synthetic-Conventional Faith: In early adolescence, we begin to see ourselves as others see us and are able to enter into interpersonal perspective-taking. A personal and largely unreflective synthesis of beliefs and values evolves to support identity and to unite one in solidarity with others.

Individuative-Reflective Faith: In young adulthood or beyond, one begins to reflect critically on the beliefs and values formed in previous stages. The ability to construct a perspective that is neither just that of the self nor reliant upon others, but rather like that of a third person enables one to understand the self and others as part of a social system. A new quality of responsibility for self and one's choices emerges.

Conjunctive Faith: At mid-life or beyond, this stage involves the embrace and integration of opposites in one's life. In this stage, symbol and story, metaphor and myth, both from one's own tradition and from others, seem to be newly appreciated.

Universalizing Faith: Beyond paradox and polarities, persons in this stage are grounded in a oneness with the power of being or God. Their visions and commitments seem to free them for a passionate yet detached spending of the self in love, devoted to overcoming division, oppression and violence, and in effective anticipatory response to an inbreaking commonwealth of love and justice, the reality of an inbreaking Kingdom of God.

JOHN WESTERHOFF - STAGES OF FAITH

Experienced faith: Pre-school and early childhood years. Faith as modeled by significant others and communicated through feelings and experience.

Affiliative faith: During childhood, faith is characterized by belonging, religious affections, and a sense of the authority of a community's creed, code, and cult.

Searching faith: During late adolescence, faith is characterized by doubt, critical judgment and experimentation.

Owned faith: Conversion marks the resolution of doubt. This stage is characterized by witness.



CHRISTIAN LIVING COMPONENTS

- #1 As Christians, we are a beatitude people called to live in Christ on a local and global level. Personal growth in the service of others is the real hope and goal of the Christian living components.
- #2 To enable our young people and ourselves to be more fully God's people, we must learn to live in solidarity with others, make moral decisions and engage the world around us. To be successful, it is essential that we build relationships, think critically and act compassionately enabling each other to come to a deeper appreciation of self and our potential.
- #3 Service projects have attempted to accomplish some of the preceding goals, but because they are often isolated experiences they are treated as an add-on to many religious education programs. **Rather than isolated experiences, Christian living components need to be integral to systematic learning and to be an ongoing part of family and parish catechetical activity.**
- #4 The Christian living components suggest age appropriate activities which are praxis oriented, requiring both action and reflection to bring gospel values into daily experience.
- #5 The following suggestions are meant as examples to spark the imagination. The local Catholic Charities, United Way, etc., can provide ample opportunities for young people to apply Gospel values in service to others. In choosing projects try to avoid duplicating the efforts of the local public schools.

Primary:

- #6
- Send letters, cards or pictures to elderly parishioners, the sick and shut-ins.
 - Adopt a mission.
 - Plant flowers or collect bottles.
 - Collect food for food pantries.
 - Send baptism cards or gifts to newly baptized.
 - Send baptism cards to RCIA neophytes.
 - Adopt a confirmation candidate as a prayer partner.
 - Make a neighborhood map.
 - Welcome new families with cards.
 - Start plant cuttings for the sick.

Intermediate:

- #7
- Cooperative games.
 - Ecology projects.
 - Make a quilt to raise money for a cause.
 - Visit or adopt an elderly neighbor.
 - Plant spring bulbs.
 - Plant and take care of a garden for a soup kitchen.
 - Visit retired priests.
 - Prepare an ethnic meal.
 - Distribute Easter baskets to the hospitalized.
 - Hold a Christmas carolling party at institutions.



Early Adolescence:

#8

- Distribute candy to hospitalized, institutionalized or shut-ins at Halloween.
- Work on a Christmas "Giving Tree."
- Sponsor a "Poor People's Supper" in the parish.
- Have a program to help around the neighborhood.
- Volunteer as library aide.
- Baby-sit neighborhood children.
- Become aware of environmental issues and work for solutions.

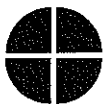
Older Adolescence:

#9

- Sponsor an Easter egg hunt for children.
- Organize and distribute baskets to the poor and those unable to get out.
- Visit a soup kitchen or shelter for the homeless and investigate why people are in need of these services. Inquire also about the needs of the shelter itself.
- Participate in community "walks" to benefit those in need.
- Volunteer time with a non-profit organization.
- Tutor younger children.
- Visit or contact a social service agency. Find out what services are provided, who is eligible, and what a person must do to secure the service.
- Find names and addresses of your state and national legislators. Determine their positions on issues that interest you. Find out on which committees they serve and work for appropriate legislation.

(cf. "Systematic Learning" #36-39.)

(cf. "Christian Formation" # 28-31.)



PERSONNEL

MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION OF A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BOARD

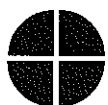
Membership

- #1
1. The membership represents a cross section of the parish who are acquainted with and who can adequately articulate parish needs and interests.
 2. The pastor and/or parish administrator and the DRE/CRE are to be considered ex-officio members.
 3. Persons who serve on parish boards should be enthusiastic, faithful Christians who advocate on behalf of the goals of religious education.

Organization*

- #2
1. The overall composition of the board provides for continuity in personnel and content.
 2. Boards function under simple procedures which clearly state the purpose, membership, terms of office, and normal schedule and method for replacing retiring members.
 3. The board functions as an advocate for religious education. Its major tasks are to assist pastoral leadership in setting goals and objectives and in planning and evaluating programs. (cf. "Principles", #15-25.)

*Assistance in forming boards and writing procedures as well as sample procedures for such boards is available at the diocesan office. (cf. "Personnel" #25-26.)



HIRING PROCESS FOR LEADERSHIP PERSONS

- #1 Before beginning to search for a leadership person in religious education, a parish needs to perform several tasks. The following are steps a parish takes before hiring a director of religious education (DRE) or coordinator of religious education (CRE).

Program Evaluation

- #2 The parish develops long-range and short-term goals for the religious education program. It also assesses the present program critically.
- #3 The program is evaluated in terms of theology, methods, organization, and administration. The evaluation can be facilitated through PREP: Parish Religious Education Evaluation and Planning provided by the Office of Religious Education (cf. p.2). In lieu of this, the Annual Parish Religious Education Report Form (cf. p.5) can assist in a general way to evaluate the program. Other evaluation questionnaires are available through the Office of Religious Education.

Parish Profile

- #4 So that the parish might have a clear picture of itself, a parish profile is developed by gathering data about size (geography, population) setting, age, educational level, ethnicity, Catholic school, economic status, style of parish leadership and catechesis, secretarial services available and physical facilities.
- #5 At this point, the pastor and Religious Education Board completes the *Parish Application for a Professional Religious Educator* available from the diocesan office.

Determining the Best Minister

- #6 The parish now determines what type of person its program needs by looking at the parish profile, the evaluation of the current program, and the program goals. The *Parish DRE/CRE/ARE Profile* is a tool which will help gain information about the scope of the job of a parish DRE/CRE and assist in creating a job description tailored to specific parish needs.
- #7 At this point, then, the parish Religious Education Board and the pastor complete the *Parish DRE/CRE/ARE Profile*. Return both the completed *Parish Application* and the completed *Profile* to the Office of Religious Education at 49 Elm Street, Worcester, MA 01609. A graph of the *Profile* will be returned to the parish and the *Parish Application Form* and *Profile Transparency* will be kept on file at the Office of Religious Education for reference for those persons who are seeking to be hired as DRE's or CRE's. The diocesan office will inform these persons of parishes wishing to hire.

Specific Descriptions

- #8 See "Personnel", #33-39 and APPENDIX A for specific descriptions of the qualifications and appropriate responsibilities of parish coordinators and directors of religious education. Use this and the information from the parish profile to determine the kind of person needed in each parish situation. (i.e. DRE or CRE.)



Develop Draft Job Description

#9 Use the listing of "Appropriate Responsibilities" from the "Personnel Handbook", Appendix A and the *DRE/CRE/ARE Profile*, to develop a draft job description. This will spell out what the parish wants its person to **undertake** and be **accountable for**. The following are some considerations:

- Supervision
- Budget
- Recruitment
- Planning
- Development
- Teaching/Staff Development
- Resources
- Communication
- Evaluation
- Expected average hours per week
- Distribution of hours.

Interviews

#10 (All persons which the parish gives serious consideration to hiring, should first be passed through the interview process of The Diocesan Office Religious Education Personnel Board). (cf. "Personnel" #41, 42.) This general screening does not intend to "match" persons with parishes but it does attempt to maintain basic standards for the diocese. The information gathered in this interview will help the local parish in its attempt to determine the best person for its program.

Salary/Job Description

- #11 The pastor, the religious education board and the prospective DRE or CRE negotiate salary and job description. The Office of Religious Education offers guidelines for salary and benefits in the diocese.
- #12 The hiring parties and DRE or CRE may need to negotiate specific terms of the contract and job description before the contract is signed. They will take into consideration the specific needs, talents, and abilities of the person to be hired along with the expectations of the draft job description.
- #13 The parish sends a copy of the contract to the Office of Religious Education along with the job description which will be kept on file with the DRE's or CRE's other records.
- #14 Please note that it is accepted practice that an annual salary review be provided which takes into consideration performance, experience, education, and the cost of living.

Performance Evaluation

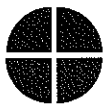
#15 An annual job performance evaluation should be conducted mutually by the DRE or CRE, the pastor and the parish religious education board during the month of January. This provides opportunities for affirmation of work well done and time to address those areas which need improvement before contract renewal considerations are made in March.



Important Considerations

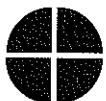
#16

When the position of director of religious education is filled by the pastoral appointment of a competent priest, the appointee should possess and plan to develop further skills necessary to function effectively in this role. (cf. "Personnel" #33-42.)

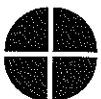


SUMMARY OF DIOCESAN REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS

	PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION	CERTIFICATION
How is certification obtained?	<p>Successfully complete the following courses for credit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTRODUCTION TO CREED . . . Survey of Catholic Belief • INTRODUCTION TO THE MINISTRY OF PARISH OR CATHOLIC SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION <p>In addition, for sacramental catechists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTRODUCTION TO SACRAMENTS AND WORSHIP 	<p>Pre-requisite: Provisional Certification</p> <p>Successfully complete the following courses for credit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE • INTRODUCTION TO SACRAMENTS & WORSHIP • INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH HISTORY • INTRODUCTION TO MORALITY
How is certification awarded?	Written certificates are awarded to each person who completes the above requirements.	Written certificates are awarded to each person who completes the above requirements.
How is certification maintained?	Continued pursuit of certification.	Earn at least one CEU every two years.
Procedures	Register for courses through the Diocesan Office of Religious Education. Once credit is obtained, provisional certification will be awarded. (Equivalency video or other previous or current work must be approved by the ORE for credit.) A personal file will be maintained by each religious educator and parish/school ORE. The Diocesan ORE will record courses, credit received and provisional certification date.	Register for courses through the Diocesan Office of Religious Education. Once credit is obtained, certification will be awarded. (Equivalency video or other previous or current work must be approved by the ORE for credit.) A personal file will be maintained by each religious educator and parish/school ORE. The Diocesan ORE will record courses, credit received and certification date.



**CANONS PERTAINING
TO
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**



Canons

CANONS PERTAINING TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Canon 208

In virtue of their rebirth in Christ there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality with regard to dignity and the activity whereby all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ in accord with each one's own condition and function.

Canon 212

§1. The Christian faithful, conscious of their own responsibility, are bound by Christian obedience to follow what the sacred pastors, as representatives of Christ, declare as teachers of the faith or determine as leaders of the Church.

§2. The Christian faithful are free to make known their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires to the pastors of the Church.

§3. In accord with the knowledge, competence and preeminence which they possess, they have the right and even at times a duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church, and they have a right to make their opinion known to the other Christian faithful, with due regard for the integrity of faith and morals and reverence toward their pastors, and with consideration for the common good and the dignity of persons.

Canon 213

The Christian faithful have the right to receive assistance from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the word of God and the sacraments.

Canon 215

The Christian faithful are at liberty freely to found and to govern associations for charitable and religious purposes or for the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world; they are free to hold meetings to pursue these purposes in common.

Canon 216

All the Christian faithful, since they participate in the mission of the Church, have the right to promote or to sustain apostolic action by their own undertakings in accord with each one's state and condition; however, no undertaking shall assume the name Catholic unless the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority is given.

Canon 217

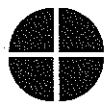
The Christian faithful since they are called by baptism to lead a life in conformity with the teaching of the gospel, have the right to a Christian education by which they will be properly instructed so as to develop the maturity of a human person and at the same time come to know and live the mystery of salvation.

Canon 226

§2. Because they have given life to their children, parents have a most serious obligation and enjoy the right to educate them: therefore Christian parents are especially to care for the Christian education of their children according to the teaching handed on by the Church.

Canon 229

§1. Lay persons are bound by the obligation and possess the right to acquire a knowledge of Christian doctrine adapted to their capacity and condition so that they can live in accord with that doctrine, announce it, defend it when necessary, and be enabled to assume their role in exercising the apostolate.



§2. Lay persons also possess the right to acquire that deeper knowledge of the sacred sciences which are taught in ecclesiastical universities or faculties or in institutes of religious sciences by attending classes and obtaining academic degrees.

§3. Likewise, the prescriptions as to the required suitability having been observed, lay persons are capable of receiving from legitimate ecclesiastical authority a mandate to teach the sacred sciences.

Canon 231

§1. Lay persons who devote themselves permanently or temporarily to some special service of the Church are obliged to acquire the appropriate formation which is required to fulfill their function properly and to carry it out conscientiously, zealously, and diligently.

§2. With due regard for Can. 230, §1, they have a right to a decent remuneration suited to their condition; by such remuneration they should be able to provide decently for their own needs and for those of their family with due regard for the prescriptions of civil law; they likewise have a right that their pension, social security and health benefits be duly provided.

Canon 769

Christian doctrine is to be proposed in a manner accommodated to the condition of its listeners and adapted to the needs of the times.

Canon 773

There is a proper and serious duty, especially on the part of pastors of souls, to provide for the catechesis of the Christian people so that the faith of the faithful becomes living, explicit and productive through formation in doctrine and the experience of Christian living.

Canon 774

§1. Under the supervision of legitimate ecclesiastical authority this concern for catechesis pertains to all the members of the Church in proportion to each one's role.

§2. Parents above others are obliged to form their children in the faith and practice of the Christian life by word and example; godparents and those who take the place of parents are bound by an equivalent obligation.

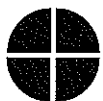
Canon 776

In virtue of his office the pastor is bound to provide for the catechetical formation of adults, young people and children, to which end he is to employ the services of the clerics attached to the parish, members of institutes of consecrated life and of societies of apostolic life, with due regard for the character of each institute, and lay members of the Christian faithful, above all catechists; all of these are not to refuse to furnish their services willingly unless they are legitimately impeded. The pastor is to promote and foster the role of parents in the family catechesis mentioned in Canon 774 §2.

Canon 777

In accord with the norms established by the diocesan bishop, the pastor is to make particular provision:

1. that suitable catechesis is given for the celebration of the sacraments;
2. that children are properly prepared for the first reception of the sacraments of penance and Most Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Confirmation by means of a catechetical formation given over an appropriate period of time;
3. that children are more fruitfully and deeply instructed through catechetical formation after the reception of First Communion;
4. that catechetical formation also be given to those handicapped in body or mind insofar as their condition permits;
5. that the faith of young people and adults be fortified, enlightened and developed through various means and endeavors.



Canon 779

Catechetical formation is to be given by employing all those helps, teaching aids and communications media which appear to be more effective in enabling the faithful in light of their characteristics, talents, age and conditions of life, to learn the Catholic teaching more fully and practice it more suitably.

Canon 843

§1. The sacred ministers can not refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, are properly disposed and are not prohibited by law from receiving them.

§2. Pastors of souls and the rest of the Christian faithful, according to their ecclesial function, have the duty to see that those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them by the necessary evangelization and catechetical formation, taking into account the norms published by the competent authority.

Canon 851

It is necessary that the celebration of baptism be properly prepared. Thus:

1. an adult who intends to receive baptism is to be admitted to the catechumenate and, to the extent possible, be led through the several stages to sacramental initiation, in accord with the order of initiation adapted by the conference of bishops and the special norms published by it;
2. the parents of an infant who is to be baptized and likewise those who are to undertake the office of sponsor are to be properly instructed in the meaning of this sacrament and the obligations which are attached to it; personally or through others the pastor is to see to it that the parents are properly formed by pastoral directions and by common prayer, gathering several families together and where possible visiting them.

Canon 868

§1. For the licit baptism of an infant it is necessary that:

1. the parents or at least one of them or the person who lawfully takes their place gives consent;
2. there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion; if such a hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be put off according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason.

§2. The infant of Catholic parents, in fact of non-Catholic parents also, who is in danger of death is licitly baptized even against the will of the parents.

Canon 872

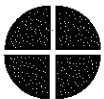
Insofar as possible one to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who is to assist an adult in Christian initiation, or, together with the parents, to present an infant at the baptism, and who will help the baptized to lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism, and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it.

Canon 874

§ 1. To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must:

1. be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the one who takes their place or, in their absence, by the pastor or minister and is to have the qualifications and intention of performing this role;
2. have completed the sixteenth year, unless a different age has been established by the diocesan bishop or it seems to the pastor or minister that an exception is to be made for a just cause;
3. be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken;
4. not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. not be the father or the mother of the one to be baptized.

§2. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may not be admitted except as a witness to baptism and together with a Catholic sponsor.



Canon 879

The sacrament of confirmation impresses a character and by it the baptized, continuing on the path of Christian initiation, are enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church; it strengthens them and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith.

Canon 889

§1. All baptized persons who have not been confirmed and only they are capable of receiving confirmation.
§2. Outside the danger of death to be licitly confirmed it is required, if the person has the use of reason, that one be suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew one's baptismal promises.

Canon 890

The faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament (Confirmation) at the appropriate time; their parents and shepherds of souls, especially pastors, are to see to it that the faithful are properly instructed to receive it and approach the sacrament at the appropriate time.

Canon 891

The Sacrament of Confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops determines another age or there is danger of death or in the judgement of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise.

Canon 892

As far as possible a sponsor for the one to be confirmed should be present; it is for the sponsor to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this sacrament.

Canon 893

§1. To perform the role of sponsor, it is necessary that a person fulfill the conditions mentioned in canon 874.
§2. It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at baptism be sponsor for confirmation.

Canon 913

§1. For the administration of the Most Holy Eucharist to children, it is required that they have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so as to understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity, and can receive the body of the Lord with faith and devotion.
§2. The Most Holy Eucharist may be given to children who are in danger of death, however, if they are able to distinguish the body of Christ from ordinary food and to receive Communion reverently.

Canon 914

It is the responsibility, in the first place, of parents and those who take the place of parents as well as of the pastor to see that children who have reached the use of reason are correctly prepared and are nourished by the divine food as early as possible, preceded by sacramental confession; it is also for the pastor to be vigilant lest any children come to the Holy Banquet who have not reached the use of reason or whom he judges are not sufficiently disposed.

Canon 988

§1. A member of the Christian faithful is obliged to confess in kind and in number all serious sins committed after baptism and not yet directly remitted through the keys of the Church nor acknowledged in individual confession, of which one is conscious after diligent examination of conscience.
§2. It is to be recommended to the Christian faithful that venial sins also be confessed.

Canon 1136

Parents have the most serious duty and the primary right to do all in their power to see to the physical, social, cultural, moral and religious upbringing of their children.

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