



DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

PARISH CATECHETICAL LEADER HANDBOOK

And He said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” ~ Luke 24:17



INTRODUCTION

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” ~ Matthew 5:14-16



Jesus called all to go and proclaim His message when He said, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (Jn 20:21). As He directed the apostles, He extends the task of catechizing to us – proclaim His Gospel and bring people into communion with God.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have set guidelines and expectations for this proclamation of Christ in the *National Directory of Catechesis*. Within this text, they have established *Six Tasks of Catechesis* which is the center of all levels of catechesis – infant, child, youth, young adult and adult.

1. Promote knowledge of the faith.
2. Promote knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and sacraments.
3. Promote moral formation in Jesus Christ.
4. Teach the Christian how to pray with Christ.
5. Prepare the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church.
6. Promote a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.

The Bishops also reiterate these qualities for a good catechist (found in the *National Directory of Catechesis*, pp. 229):

- A love of God and of Christ’s Church, our Holy Father and God’s holy people.
- A coherence and authenticity of life that is characterized by their faithful practice of the faith in a spirit of faith, charity, hope, courage and joy.
- Personal prayer and dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church.
- A missionary zeal by which they are fully convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith and enthusiastically proclaim it.
- Active participation in their local parish community, especially by attendance at Sunday Eucharist.
- A devotion to Mary, the first disciple and the model of catechists, and of the Most Holy Eucharist, the source of nourishment for catechists.

The most vibrant catechetical programs are rooted in the life of Christ and the communion of persons. Catechesis of all ages should be a priority in parish life. The form that this catechesis takes can be numerous. With new technology, resources, and human commitments, catechetical leaders are challenged to design and provide faith opportunities that are engaging and evangelizing within new settings.

Parish based catechesis falls into many different categories:

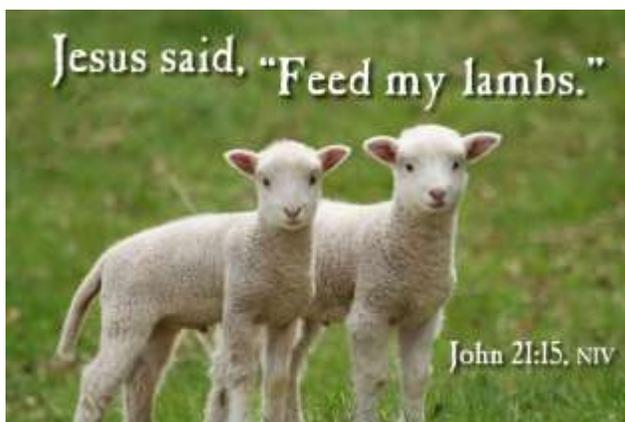
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|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Adult Formation | Youth Ministry |
| Family Centered | Baptismal Preparation |
| Home-Based | Rite of Christian Initiation |
| Programming for Children | Marriage Preparation |
| Religious Education | Mission Trips |
| School | Bible Study |
| Intergenerational Programs | Prayer Group |
| | And many others... |



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DIOCESAN & PARISH TEAM MEMBER

"Faith is to believe what we do not see; and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe." ~ St. Augustine of Hippo, Patron Saint of the Diocese of Superior

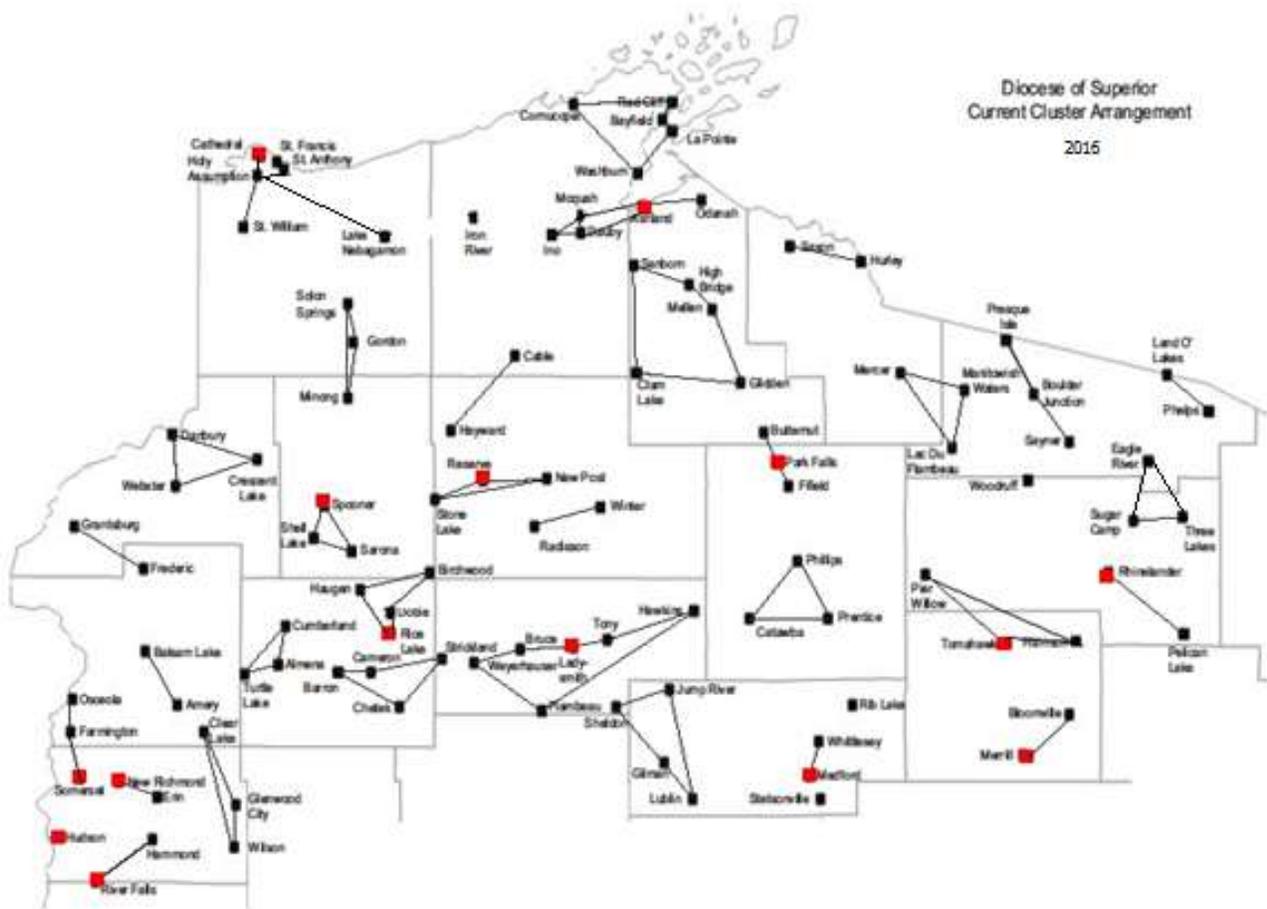


The Catholic Diocese of Superior, established in 1905, comprises the 16 northern counties of Wisconsin, which include: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Lincoln, Oneida, Polk, Price, Rush, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor, Vilas and Washburn. The Diocese covers 15,715 square miles and has a Catholic population of over 78,000. There are 103 parishes in 33 clusters with about 71 parish religious education programs and 14 schools. There are about 5,100 students in faith formation and 1,969 in the schools.

Diocesan Website: www.catholicdos.org

Mission Statement

The Catholic Diocese of Superior is a people of diverse ethnic and cultural traditions called in unity by the love of Christ to proclaim the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, and give witness through joyful lives of prayer and service to Northern Wisconsin and throughout the world.



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BISHOP'S ROLE IN CATECHESIS

The Bishop is the chief pastor and catechist of the diocese and is responsible for the entire catechetical and formation program of the Diocese of Superior. He appoints diocesan personnel to make sure Vatican and national guidelines are carried out at the local level. He delegates the responsibility of carrying out the catechetical mission to the pastor and the diocesan staff.

PASTOR'S ROLE IN CATECHESIS

The Pastor, (as well as Parish Life Coordinator or Parish Director) has authority and concern in all facets of parish life. He is to ensure that the goals of the diocesan catechetical mission are met. He may delegate a parish catechetical leader to assist him in carrying out this mission. As defined in the National Directory of Catechesis, the pastor is to ensure:

- † Suitable catechesis is imparted for the celebration of the sacraments.
- † Through catechetical instruction imparted for an appropriate period of time children are prepared properly for the first reception of the sacraments of penance, the Most Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of confirmation.
- † Having received first communion [and confirmation] these children are enriched more fully and deeply through catechetical formation.
- † Catechetical formation is given also to those who are physically and mentally impeded, insofar as their condition permits.
- † The faith of youth and adults is strengthened, enlightened and developed through various means and endeavors.
- † Catechesis is emphasized in a way that provides age-appropriate opportunities for adults, youth and children.
- † A total parish plan for catechesis is developed and implemented in consultation with the parish council and parish catechetical leadership.
- † Catechesis for adults of all ages is a priority.
- † Catechesis of youth and young adults is situated within a comprehensive plan for youth ministry in the parish.
- † Catechists at all levels are well formed and trained for this task.
- † Catechetical formation is available for all language groups.
- † The baptismal catechumenate is a vital component in the organization of catechesis in the parish
- † The catechumenate is an essential process in the parish, one that serves as the inspiration for all catechesis.”

National Directory of Catechesis. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2005. p. 220-221.

ROLE OF THE PARISH CATECHETICAL LEADER

According to Employing Parish Catechetical Leaders: A Practical Handbook, developed by the Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation (WDREF), a parish catechetical leader “is responsible for the administration of the specified areas of the religious education and Christian formation program in fulfillment of the catechetical mission of the parish. As defined by the National Directory of Catechesis the main responsibilities of the Parish Catechetical Leader are:

- † Overall direction of the parish catechetical programs for adults, youth and children.
- † Planning, implementation and evaluation of the parish catechetical program.
- † Recruitment, formation, ongoing development and evaluation of catechists.
- † Implementation of diocesan and parish catechetical policies and guidelines, including the areas of catechist certification and supervision and administrative policies related to negligence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and the safety and protection of minors.
- † Collaboration with the pastor, other parish ministers, the school principal and appropriate committees, boards and councils.
- † Assistance in liturgical planning.
- † Attention to their own personal, spiritual and professional development.

National Directory of Catechesis. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2005. p. 225.

ROLE OF THE YOUTH MINISTER

According to Employing Parish Catechetical Leaders: A Practice Handbook, developed by the Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation (WDREF), the Youth Minister “is responsible for ministering to youth through programs and activities, planned in collaboration with other parish catechetical leaders and parishioners, which are

centered in the Gospel, prayer and service, guiding and empowering youth to full and responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the parish faith community.”

ROLE OF THE CATECHIST

The catechist has been personally called to share in the prophetic ministry of Christ and the evangelizing mission of the Church. To catechize means to teach by word of mouth. Therefore, the role of a catechist is to teach the faith of the Catholic Church both by word and example.

DIOCESAN TEAM MEMBER

The Director and Associate Director of Catholic Formation have been appointed by Bishop to ensure that the guidelines and mission of catechesis and evangelization are carried out within the diocese. To do this, these diocesan components have been developed to provide communication and continuing catechist formation to the parishes.

DIOCESAN WEBSITE – The diocesan website provides information from the Bishop Hammes Center.
<http://catholicdos.org/>

CATECHETICAL LEADER NEWSLETTER – The Catechetical Leader is a newsletter that is distributed electronically each month. Within this newsletter you will find information on programs, updated guidelines, planning and formation. Past issues of this newsletter are found on the diocesan website at <http://catholicdos.org/catechetical-leader>.

CATECHETICAL SUNDAY – This day is usually celebrated the third Sunday in September. Information regarding this day as well as resources for catechist commissioning are provided by the diocesan staff.

CATECHETICAL WEEK – This week is celebrated in November. Materials to celebrate catechesis in the parishes are provided from the diocesan offices.

CALENDAR – A diocesan calendar of events is established for the catechetical year. This calendar can be found on the Catechetical Leader and on the Chancery calendar on the website.

FALL CONFERENCE – A diocesan conference is held in October every year to celebrate the good things happening within all of our parishes and to offer continuing formation for catechists and leaders. The bishop celebrates Mass and a well-established key-note speaker offers inspiration. All programs are asked to send catechists to the conference.

CATECHETICAL DIRECTORY - A directory of all catechetical leaders in the parishes and schools of the diocese is formatted and distributed from the Bishop Hammes Center every fall.

ANNUAL SURVEY – Every fall the diocesan offices ask the parish catechetical leaders to complete a survey of information about the local parish programming. This survey allows the diocese to 1) check to ensure the mission of the Bishop is being carried out and 2) to determine the needs of the parishes and services to provide.

SUMMIT – The Superior Mutual Ministry Team is an organization of parish catechetical leaders in the Diocese of Superior that exists to offer support, inspiration, and formation to its members.

EVALUATION, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING – Diocesan staff are available to assist parishes in developing programming and establishing a catechetical plan.

CURRICULUM – The diocese has a published religion curriculum that coincides with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and major textbook companies. This curriculum has been promulgated by the bishop as the guide for catechesis within the parishes. Copies of these curriculum guides can be found on the diocesan website <http://catholicdos.org/religious-education-curriculum>.

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES – Guidelines for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation can be found on the diocesan website <http://catholicdos.org/sacramental-preparation>.

LEADERSHIP DAYS AND ORIENTATION – Every August, the diocese holds a day for parish catechetical leaders to come together and learn of important information for the upcoming catechetical year. New and next to new catechetical leaders have the opportunity to attend an orientation session to assist them in their new ministry.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT – The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) require every diocese to provide a program for the protection of young people. Our diocese has an established Safe Environment program with guidelines found on the diocesan website (<http://catholicdos.org/safe-environment>) as well as a binder found at every parish. The coordinator for this program is Kathy Drinkwine.

FORMING EFFECTIVE DISCIPLES – In following the directives of the Holy See and USCCB our diocese provides a formation program for catechists and leaders. This program is outlined in a handbook as well as on the diocesan website <http://catholicdos.org/forming-effective-disciples>. The facilitator for this program is Kathy Drinkwine.

CONSULTATION – Diocesan staff are available for general and legal consultation for catechetical programming.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – The Diocese has policies and procedures manuals for programs, employees, volunteers and safe environment requirements. See the Administrators section of this handbook for further information.

SUPERIOR CATECHIST – The Diocese publishes the Superior Catechist twice a year. This publication is mailed out to all catechists and teachers in parishes and schools. It provides educational and catechetical information to help individuals grow spiritually and professionally. Archived editions are found on the diocesan website <http://catholicdos.org/superior-catechist>.

PARISH COLLABORATION

The diocese encourages all of its formation programs – adult, religious education, youth ministry and schools to work collaboratively to fulfill the Church’s mission. Within the diocese there are fourteen elementary Catholic schools. These schools are also a catechetical mission of the Church entrusted with the same prophet and evangelization mission as all other parish formation programs.

BISHOP POWERS’ MESSAGE, MAY 24, 2017

“We are called to treat everyone as a child of God, including ourselves. What an amazing place the world could be if we all accepted this challenge. Often our faith formation meetings involve discussing how to get families, children and teachers engaged in the parish religious education programs. It can be a depressing task. Joining together in collaborative opportunities with others would be beneficial to all of us.

The past years have proven more than once that catechists need to be more than a warm heart or a warm body in the classroom. With the changing ways of society, the need for teaching the absolute Truths of God, has become imperative. As Catholics it is important to teach the Truth: that marriage is a sacrament between one man and one woman, that abortion is wrong regardless of the situation... etc. Everyone needs to know the Church’s teachings and everyone needs to teach the Church’s teachings. Sadly, the average “good Catholic” is not able to speak on these topics and catechists in the Diocese of Superior are all across the board on where the Church stands on issues. It’s unfair to families, children and catechists to send them into a classroom without being able to answer the questions. The “other side” has their act together – they can articulate the false truths so eloquently that they can speak to convince of false hopes and promises.

Possibly because of finances, fewer and fewer parishes are able to hire trained leaders with specialized education who can pass on the faith. The importance of priests supporting the education of catechetical leaders is becoming more and more evident. This may mean having to admit that help is needed. This is okay. God did not create people to be islands in and of themselves. There is a need for everyone to work together. A great example of this would be for larger parishes to share their leadership resources, especially for those who have advanced degrees to support and guide those who do not have training or a degree.

My hope and prayer, and I hope and pray, is that by revitalizing SUMMIT, and all of us working together in tandem with the Department of Formation, we can devise a way to provide catechists what they need to teach the faith in

what we need it to be”

PURPOSE OF CATECHESIS

The purpose of catechesis is to awaken initial faith in individuals and help sustain conversion. It brings believers to faith in Jesus Christ. Catechesis leads people to “enter the mystery of Christ, encounter Him, and to discover themselves and the meaning of their lives in Him.”

National Directory of Catechesis. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2005. p. 550.

The Bishops of the United States say that “all efforts in evangelization and catechesis should incorporate” the Six Tasks of Catechesis.



PCL AS ADMINISTRATOR

Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it—not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. ~ 1 Peter 5:2-4



TIPS AND TO-DO'S FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

Make the year a work in progress.

Don't feel you have to have everything done before your begin.

- Kim Palmer, Director of Catholic Formation, Immaculate Conception Parish, New Richmond, WI

1. Establish a **calendar** or framework for the catechetical year.
2. Identify the texts and other resources that will be used for each grade level in regard to diocesan **curriculum guidelines**.
3. Review and/or post for student **registrations** for the youth catechetical program.
4. Interview and invite credible, faith-filled adults to the ministry of catechesis.
5. Review and update the communication forms and/or **parent handbook** in the catechetical program which include items such as: a discipline policy, expectations and requirements for sacraments and procedures for dropping off and pickup up children.
6. Develop a “tickler file” for each event. Put information on planning and procedures as well as notes on what needs to change for the next year.
7. Set up modes of communication for parents – bulletin boards, emails, bulletin announcements, mailings, and handbook.
8. Establish a data base of all families in the program which includes names of all family members and ages, phone numbers, address and email.

PAPERWORK FOR CATECHISTS

9. Distribute a copy of the Parish Personnel Policies for Volunteers or Lay Employees to all NEW catechists. Collect a signed Acknowledgement of Receipt from each one.
10. Distribute a copy of the Morals and Ethics Policy to all NEW catechists. Collect a signed Morals and Ethics Assurance Statement from each one.
11. Distribute a copy of the Morals and Ethics Annual Affirmation Statement to all returning catechists. Collect a signed copy from each one.
12. Review each **catechists file** and determine who is in need of a background check. Submit to the diocese a signed *Code of Conduct* for each catechist needing renewal.
13. Conduct BASE (Basic Adult Safe Environment) training for all catechists and volunteers who need it. Submit a training report to the diocese.
14. Provide catechists with teaching materials and curriculums they will be expected to cover throughout the year.
15. Provide catechists with a **handbook** outlining procedures and responsibilities.
16. Establish opportunities for orientation and in-services for catechists in the areas of good catechetical praxis and continuing adult faith formation.

PASTORAL TEAM MEMBER

The goal of parish catechesis is to educate the community members about the faith. To do this, the parish needs to ensure that the parish pastoral team is cohesive and collaborative. A parish catechetical leader might have a catechetical team – secretary, youth minister or other co-workers. This team should consist of volunteers who work side-by-side with the leader to bring the faith to the people. It is encouraged that every parish have a parish education committee that works with the catechetical leader to maintain a broader vision for total parish faith formation.

In addition to the closer knit group of catechetical team members, the parish should also maintain a vibrant pastoral team to ensure that all parts of the parish community work together to provide for total parish faith formation. A good pastoral team consists of all parish leadership that are instrumental in providing community formation. A common parish vision for adults, youth, children, families, etc. can be carried out more effectively with a total parish

pastoral team. Regular meetings of this pastoral team should occur more than once a month in order to 1) calendar events, 2) plan current and future events and goals, 3) vision for future outcomes, 4) collaborate and establish a cohesive message, and 5) keep the mission of the parish at the forefront of all that is done.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HANDBOOKS

Each parish program should have a handbook for 1) employees and volunteers and 2) participants in the program. These handbooks help to guide the program as well as inform those working and participating in the program of what is expected.

An ***EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK*** should include such things as:

- The Parish Mission Statement
- Goals for the Program
- Qualifications of Catechists
- Job Descriptions
- Guidelines for Presenting Good Sound Doctrine
- Specific local policies in these areas:
 - Sacramental prep guidelines
 - General discipline and classroom use
 - Attendance and dismissal
 - General conduct and discipline
 - Dress code
 - Emergency and First Aid
 - Fire and Natural Disaster procedures
 - Harassment and Child Abuse
 - Diocesan Policies
 - Intruder and other Safety procedures
 - Confidentiality
 - Field Trips
- Medication Distribution Policies
- Ministry guidelines for catechists:
 - Check-in
 - Manuals and handbooks
 - Curriculum and student textbooks
 - Supply lists and request forms
 - Substitutes
 - Guest Speakers and visitors
 - Parties/snacks
 - Classroom reminders
- Other relevant information
 - Annual calendar
 - Volunteer catechist agreement
 - Catechist formation process
 - Parish catechist certification record
 - Prayer for catechesis

A ***FAMILY OR PARTICIPANTS HANDBOOK*** should include such things as:

- The Parish Mission Statement
- Goals of the Program
- Names and numbers of the pastoral staff members
- Annual calendar
- Specific Policies and Procedures
 - Registration Materials
 - Sacramental Prep guidelines
 - General discipline guidelines
 - Attendance and dismissal
 - Dress code
 - Fire, Natural Disaster and Emergency procedures
 - Harassment and Child Abuse
 - Field Trips and Visitors
 - Medication procedures
 - Curriculum and textbooks
 - Snacks
 - Etc.

DIOCESAN POLICY MANUAL

Every parish has a copy of the ***DIOCESAN POLICY MANUAL***. It consists of two green binders, one labeled Policy Manual and the other labeled Appendixes. These policies are related to such things as: sacraments, worship, canonical norms, the Chancery, pastoral ministry, diocesan and parish administration, diocesan and parish finance, human services, faith formation, and societies and organizations.



DIOCESAN PERSONNEL POLICIES

All parish personnel policies are contained in the official document: **PERSONNEL POLICIES FOR PARISH EMPLOYEES**. Please refer to these documents for the detailed policies of the diocese and of the local parish.

Every parish employee is required to have a copy of this document.

Every volunteer is required to have a copy of **PERSONNEL POLICIES FOR PARISH VOLUNTEERS** - <https://catholicdos.org/human-resources>

Every supervisor is required to have a copy of the above policies plus a copy of a **SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PARISH PERSONNEL POLICIES**

JOB DESCRIPTION

It is important to ensure that there is a job description for the position being held. This job description explains the qualifications and requirements of the position as well as the expectations. These components then are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the person within the position. There should be a job description for the PCL, catechists as well as any volunteers. Sample job descriptions can be obtained from the Office of Catholic Formation or found on the diocesan website - <https://catholicdos.org/human-resources>.

RECORDS

Accuracy of the faith formation office records keeps the program running efficiently. It is key to have a method for coordinating and retrieving **STUDENT AND FAMILY** information in these areas:

- Registration (new and re-registration)
- New student inquiries
- Permanent family records
- Medical situations and emergencies
- Transfers
- Attendance
- Sacraments
- Field Trip Permission Forms
- Image and Likeness (Photo) Permission Forms

It's also important to keep accurate records for **PERSONNEL AND VOLUNTEERS** and ensure they are kept in a locked file cabinet. Some items to have in a personnel/volunteer file are:

- Resume and/or contact information, experience and parish commitments
- Emergency contact information
- Signed Morals and Ethics Assurance Statement
- Signed Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Personnel Policies
- Job description
- Copy of signed Code of Conduct
- Commendations and recommendations
- Attendance record
- Performance evaluations
- Catechetical Certification transcripts

All records pertaining to payroll should be kept in the parish business office.

REGISTRATION

Registration of children and youth in parish programs allows the parish to maintain a record of parish families as well as pertinent needs for catechetical instruction. Information collected should be what is important and necessary for maximum efficiency. It is easiest to conduct registrations in the spring of the year for the following school year; however that is not always practical or efficient. Having registration available on-line is the most beneficial process for accessibility to parents, but mailing registrations out to prospective families can be done in late summer early fall. The earlier the registrations are received the easier it is to plan for program materials and numbers of catechists.

Sample Registration

Date: _____
Father's Full Name: _____ Religion: _____
Phone: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Work <input type="checkbox"/> Cell <input type="checkbox"/> Home Email: _____
Mailing Address/City/State/Zip: _____
Mother's Full Name: _____ Religion: _____

Phone: _____ Work Cell Home Email: _____
Mailing Address/City/State/Zip: _____
Custodial Agreement: Joint Mother Father
Note: Copies of court ordered restrictions or parental rights must be on file in the Faith Formation Office
Emergency Contact Person: _____ Relationship: _____
Phone: _____ Work Cell Home

Child's Full Name	Birthday	Current Grade	Baptism Date	Communion Date	Reconciliation Date

List all other children living at home, name and birthdate.

List any special needs, allergies or considerations for any of the given children.

Registration Fees:
\$40.00 for 1 child: _____
\$60.00 for 2 children: _____
\$75.00 for 3 or more: _____

Class Times:
Grades PK-K: Sunday 8:30-9:30
Grades 1-6 (please check your choice):
_____ Sunday 8:30-9:45 AM **OR**
_____ Wednesday 4:00-5:15 PM
Grades 7-8: Wednesday 6:00-7:30 PM
Grades 9-10: Wednesday 7:30-9:00 PM
Confirmation: Sunday 6:30-8:30 PM

Additional Fees:
_____ \$15.00 for Reconciliation & First Communion
_____ \$10.00 for Confirmation

Total Registration Fees: _____
Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Bradley, Ruth and Mary Ann Taeger. *The Effective DRE: Keeping Records and Budget*. Loyola Press. 1998. Figure 2, page 32.

MANAGEMENT

RECRUITING AND MENTORING NEW CATECHISTS

In most parish programs, catechists are volunteers. There is an abundance of personal reasons why people volunteer. No matter the reason, this person likes to feel their time and efforts are well-placed. When considering who will be best in what position, remember that a “warm body” does not make for good catechesis, nor does it benefit the person in the role.

Volunteers or any catechist will perform their job most effectively when they:

- Perform tasks that are fulfilling for them and in which they have a sense of accomplishment or achievement.
- Are given real responsibility for people or tasks that make a difference.
- Are thanked and recognized regularly for their participation.
- Experience personal satisfaction and growth.

Volunteers and any catechist are discouraged in their work when:

- There is conflict with the organization’s policies and administrators.
- There is too much, too little or inadequate supervision.
- There are poor working conditions, coworkers who compete or argue and inadequate rewards.

CALENDAR

When developing the calendar for the year, create separate ones for the catechists and the parents. Advise the diocesan calendar of events and include pertinent opportunities. Advise the parish calendar to not conflict with other activities and meetings as well as promote faith opportunities. If using the classroom model lay out a minimum of 24 face-to-face classes. If using other formats establish the dates and times for those meetings and events. Include any parish, sacramental, continuing education/in-service or liturgical events and celebrations in the calendar that may be beneficial to the catechists and parents in enhancing faith opportunities. By beginning the year with an established calendar, you will be able to better prepare yourself for the each activity.

Sample Calendar:

St. Patrick Elementary Faith Formation Event and Session Calendar for 2011-2012	
August	January
27-28 Catechetical Sunday – Celebrated at all Masses	4 No Formation Sessions (All Catechist In-service)
September	11 Formation Session Week 13
7 Elementary Catechist Orientation	18 Formation Session Week 14
13 Fall Regional Workshop, St. Joseph, Amery	21 First Reconciliation Service (10:00 AM)
14 All Catechist In-service – Teaching the Mass Changes	25 Formation Session Week 15
21 Formation Session Week 1 – First Session	February
28 Formation Session Week 2	1 Formation Session Week 16
October	8 Formation Session Week 17
5 Formation Session Week 3	15 Formation Session Week 18 ***Family Night***
12 Diocesan Fall Conference, Rice Lake	22 No Formation Session (Ash Wednesday)
12 Formation Session Week 4	29 Formation Session Week 19
15 & 16 1 st Communion & Confirmation Enrollment (at all Masses)	March
19 No Formation Session (NWEA Conference)	7 Formation Session Week 20
26 Formation Session Week 5	13 Parish Lent Reconciliation Service (7:00 PM)
November	14 Formation Session Week 21
2 *** All Souls Day Prayer Service & Social, 6 PM ***	21 Diocesan Youth Rally, Phillips
9 Formation Session Week 7 ***Safe Environment	21 No Formation Sessions (Spring Break)
16 Formation Session Week 8	28 Formation Session Week 22
23 No Formation Sessions (Happy Thanksgiving)	April
30 Formation Session Week 9	4 No Formation Sessions (Holy Week)
December	11 Formation Session Week 23
7 Formation Session Week 10	18 Formation Session Week 24
13 Parish Advent Reconciliation (7:00 PM)	25 Formation Session – Closing Mass & Social (6 PM)
14 Formation Session Week 11	28 1 st Communion at Parish Masses
21 Formation Session Week 12	29 1 st Communion at Parish Masses
28 No Formation Sessions (Merry Christmas)	May
	5 & 6 1 st Communion at Parish Masses
	6 1 st Communion Large Group (2:00 PM)

St. Patrick, Hudson, Elementary Faith Formation Calendar, edited from website - <http://stpatrickofhudson.org/files/stpatrick/files/Ecalendar20112012.pdf>

CATECHIST MEETINGS & IN-SERVICES

It is important to provide catechists with meeting and in-service opportunities. Meetings scheduled periodically allows for the Parish Catechetical Leader to give catechists information regarding calendar events, procedure changes or other pertinent matters. In-services allow the Parish Catechetical Leader to provide the catechist with training in specific areas of need, such as teaching techniques, classroom management, or faith formation topics.

SUBSTITUTES

Have a list of volunteer catechists who are willing to substitute for other catechists. Establish procedures for obtaining these substitutes. Inform catechists what they should have prepared for substitutes. All substitutes need to be background checked and safe environment trained.

DIRECTORIES

Directories listing families and volunteers for the parish program are acceptable. Having this directory may help in planning for events or for catechists to have contact with families. The information included in such a directory may include name, address, phone number or email address. In order to publish this information, written consent needs to be given by the individual/family.

COMMUNICATION

It is important to establish good communication strategies with peers, catechists and parents. Good communication relies on positive relationships with others. In the role of Catechetical Leader, it is vital to portray oneself as a minister of Christ's Word – which means to act in accordance to His teachings. Good communication consists of speaking clearly and honestly, listening and understanding, giving positive nonverbal feedback and being collaborative in discussion.

Communication may take several forms – written, verbal or electronic. Whichever form it takes it is important to keep in mind the pastoral mission of the role as Catechetical Leader.

EVALUATING PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

It is always important to evaluate any program in progress and at the end of the year. Evaluation does not mean finding something wrong, but rather looking at the pros and cons of what is happening. Effective evaluation will allow for the program to grow and keep current with modern strategies. To conduct an evaluation, one might simply talk with those involved – students, parents, catechists – or put out a survey periodically. It is always important to ensure that there is growth and possibly change with a program to keep it interesting and “in-tune” with parish needs and vision. The diocese is available to help in this evaluation process.

SAFETY

TRANSPORTATION/DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

Parish programs rely on many different modes of student transportation to and from classes and events.

When relying on **PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES** to drop off students for after school programs, a safe designated area must be established for the busses to maneuver and students to exit the busses. Public school busses may also be used for field trips and transportation to and from specific events. In these cases it is important to follow the policies and rules established by the school bus company.

Most programs rely on **PARENTAL TRANSPORTATION** for student attendance at parish programs. It is important that there is a safe designated area for parents to drop students off. Students need to be able to go from the vehicle to the building without having to “dodge” moving vehicles. It usually works best if parents are required to bring their child(ren) into the building when dropping them off and then coming to the building when it is time to pick up the child(ren).

Some programs rely on **STUDENT PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION**. When working with youth ministry and high school programs, many of the students have their driver's license. Policies need to be established on how students are expected to enter and exit parking lots, drive with other students in the vehicles, etc.

FIELD TRIPS

The **DIOCESAN SAFE ENVIRONMENT RESOURCE BINDER** has specific guidelines for Field Trips - <https://catholicdos.org/safe-environment>. For legal and liability reasons, parishes are expected to follow these guidelines and use the diocesan forms.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The **DIOCESAN SAFE ENVIRONMENT RESOURCE BINDER** provides all the guidelines necessary to ensure a safe environment for students in parish programs. This binder includes forms and documents pertinent to safe environment and curriculum guidelines and resources. It is required that all parish volunteers and employees follow these guidelines that are outlined. The information is also found on the diocesan website (<https://catholicdos.org/safe-environment>) and any questions can be directed to Kathy Drinkwine.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

It is imperative that every student feel safe within the parish program. Therefore, the parish should have a crisis/safety management plan. This plan should be formed in collaboration with the local safety community (fire, police, etc) as well as the parish and school community (teachers, parents, children, etc.). Guidelines for the crisis/safety plan are available from the diocese.

FIRE, TORNADO, INCLEMENT WEATHER OR OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS

Because the students in parish programs do not spend an exorbitant amount of time in the parish buildings, it is imperative that they know how to exit the building in case of a fire. It is also important to practice this drill so younger students are not frightened and that all students know what to do so catechists can maintain order during such an incident.

For the same reason as a fire drill, tornado drills are strongly recommended. It is recommended to practice the tornado drill at least once every fall and spring.

Procedures and plans need to be established for fire and tornado drills as well as what will occur for possible other natural disasters such as inclement weather or flooding.

SUPPORT

ORGANIZATIONS

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR...

- Sponsors a fall conference.
- Is available for in-service and staff development upon request.
- Provides various forms for programs.
- Assists reviewing letters of hire and job descriptions.
- Provides curriculum guides.
- Provides policies, regulations, guidelines and expectations.
- Provides Catholic leadership for Catholic education and sets a vision catechesis.
- Acts as a resource on various matters.
- Provides direction and guidance when requested.
- Provides opportunity for collaboration on important issues.
- Sets standards.
- Sponsors catechetical certification courses.



SUPERIOR MUTUAL MINISTRIES TEAM (SUMMIT)

The diocesan and parish catechetical leaders who created SUMMIT in 1982 called it a "team" to convey the connectedness among all catechetical ministries in our diocese. The phrase "mutual ministry" acknowledges that our ministries are interrelated. Our ministries are most effective when we approach each other with mutual sharing and respect.



SUMMIT is dedicated to the support the advancement of all parish catechetical leaders in the Diocese of Superior. Anyone who works in a leadership role in catechesis within a parish is eligible for membership. Whether you are full-time, part-time, paid, or volunteer ... Whether you are a pastoral associate, youth minister, deacon, or pastor... If you bear any responsibility for catechesis, SUMMIT is for you!

SUMMIT offers: a vision of catechesis that will energize you, times to come together for support and shared prayer, mentoring for new catechetical leaders, collaborative ministry programs, opportunities to dialog with our Bishop and with other diocesan catechetical leaders and so much more.

WISCONSIN DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FEDERATION (WDREF)

WDREF is an organization whose purpose is both ministerial and professional. It provides a vehicle for reflection and action on issues affecting the catechetical ministry of the Catholic Church.



WDREF's objectives are to:

- Provide opportunities for mutual support and growth.
- Promote the profession of Director and Coordinator of Religious Education (DRE/CRE) on regional, diocesan, state and national levels.

In November 1980 founding members stated that WDREF's purpose was "to affirm our role as professional ministers in a living Church and to recognize our responsibility to serve the people of God."

The Federation is governed by a Board consisting of 15 representatives (three from each association) serving three year terms. An Executive Team is discerned from the Board membership to serve two year terms as Facilitator, Secretary and Treasurer.

Even though the acronym DRE is part of WDREF's name, all catechetical leaders in our diocese have the opportunity to become full members of WDREF.

PUBLICATIONS

Catechist Magazine, Peter Li, Inc.

RTJ's Creative Catechist, Magazine, Bayard, Inc.

Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (YOUCAT), Ignatius Press, 2011

Catholic Resource Book, Our Sunday Visitor, 2007

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2006

National Directory for Catechesis, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States, Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 1999

General Directory of Catechesis, Congregation for the Clergy, United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C., 1997

Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 1997

Sons and Daughters of the Light, A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults, United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C., 1996

Catechism of the Catholic Church, United States Catholic Conference, 1994

TERMINOLOGY AND ACRONYMS

Adult Education (AE) – education for adults, whether in faith or secular studies. Also may be referred to *Adult Faith Formation (AFF)*

Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education (ACRE) – an assessment of child and youth faith knowledge from the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)

Basic Adult Safe Environment Training (BASE) – training about safe environment and appropriate behavior for adults who plan to work with minors in the Diocese of Superior.

Bishop Hammes Center (BHC) – the Curia office building in Haugen, WI that houses the offices of Catholic Formation and Schools. (The Curia is the offices of those who Bishop appoints to assist him.)

Catechesis – also referred to as *Religious Education (RE)* or *Faith Formation (FF)* – the education of individuals in the faith. Some individuals still refer to this as CCD which actually means Confraternity of Christian Doctrine which was an association established in 1562 for the purpose of giving religious education.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) - is the catechism promulgated for the Catholic Church by Pope John Paul II in 1992. It sums up, in book form, the beliefs of the Catholic faithful.

Center for Ministry Development (CMD) – an organization that promotes the development of ministry and catechesis with youth and families through leadership formation, service learning, and resources rooted in Catholic tradition and Scripture.

Charter – this is the document created in 2002 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (U.S.C.C.B.) in response to the sexual abuse crisis.

Control List – this is the database maintained by the diocese, indicating who is currently active with minors along with background check and training

Extreme Faith Camp (EFC) – the camp held two weeks during the summer for middle school youth to experience faith in a deeper way

Forming Effective Disciples (FED) – the program that helps individual teachers, catechists and leaders achieve certification in catechesis through the Diocese of Superior. There are two required levels – foundational and elevated.

General Director of Catechesis (GDC) - a document written by the Congregation for the Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, based in Rome, that discusses practical and theoretical aspects of linking catechesis to evangelization. It is addressed both to the clergy and lay catechists.

Generations of Faith (GOF) – a program in a multi-generation format of catechesis in the parishes.

Lay Ecclesial Ministry (LEM) - the term adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to identify the relatively new category of pastoral ministers in the Catholic Church who serve the Church but are not ordained.

National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) – the national organization that provides professional development and resources for school leaders and teachers.

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) – the national organization that provides professional development and resources for parish leaders in religious education and youth ministry

National Directory of Catechesis (NDC) – a publication of the USCCB that builds on some of the core themes of the GDC, like catechesis's relationship to evangelization and worship, and provides practical tools for doing catechesis well.

National Evangelization Team Ministries (NET Ministries) – an organization established in 1981 under the ecclesiastical care of the Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis which has 16 teams that travel across the U.S. for nine months to share the Gospel with young people and their families

National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) – the national organization that provides professional development and resources for parish youth ministers. This organization hold the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) every two years.

Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) – also referred to as *Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE)*, *Cluster Catechetical Leader (CCL)*, *Coordinator of Youth Activities (CYA)*, *Director of Faith Formation (DFP)*, *Director of Religious Education (DRE)*, or *Youth Minister (YM)* – an individual, appointed/hired by the pastor/PLC/PD or the parish to oversee the faith formation programs in such areas as children and youth religious education, sacramental preparation, youth ministry, adult formation and RCIA.

Parish Life Coordinator (PLC) and Parish Director (PD) – a qualified deacons, religious, or lay persons entrusted with a participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish where there is no resident pastor.

Parochial Administrator – a priest who may have the same duties and scope of authority as a pastor; however, these may be limited by the bishop.

Pastor - "the proper shepherd" of a parish – a priest who exercises his authority as an extension of the bishop and in the example of Christ, the Good Shepherd. He must care for the souls of the faithful entrusted to them. Each must fulfill his duties to teach, to sanctify and to govern the faithful with the cooperation of assistant/associate/sacramental priests, deacons, religious and laity of the parish.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) – a process of education, faith sharing, and rituals for parishes to welcome new members into the Catholic Church.

Sacramental Minister – a priest that does not have any administrative roles, and are responsible for preaching the Gospel and the Sacraments while collaborating with a Parish Life Coordinator or Parish Director who coordinates the activities of a parish.

Status Animarum Questionnaire (SAQ) – annual parish report to the diocese

Superior Mutual Ministry Team (SUMMIT) – a professional organization in the Diocese of Superior for those who serve in the ministry of faith formation. It aims to offer support, inspiration, spiritual growth and formation to members.

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (USCCA) – an adult resources of the CCC to be used as an aid and a guide for individuals and small groups to deepen their faith.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) – an assembly of the bishops of the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands who jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States.

Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) – a conference of the bishops of Wisconsin that serves as an advocate on matters related to the interests and values of the Church; provides decision makers with studied positions on social and moral issues; offers a forum for diocesan personnel to meet, exchange information, deliberate and recommend policies or actions; and formulates and publishes opinions and positions on legislation and public policy.

Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation (WDREF) – an organization in the state of Wisconsin whose purpose is to provide a vehicle for reflection and action on issues affecting the catechetical ministry of the Catholic Church.

Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (YOUCAT) – a youth resource of the CCC to be used as an aid and guide for individual and small groups to deepen their faith.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is a complete lifestyle based on living out Christ's instruction to "love one another as I have loved you". It is responsible management of time, talent and treasure to enhance our relationship with God and one another.

CATECHETICAL PLANNING

Through his encyclical *Catechesi Tradendae*, Pope John Paul II laid out a framework for a renewal of catechesis. Because of this, the *Code of Canon Law* was revised and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *General Directory of Catechesis* were published. From this the United States Bishops published the *National Directory of Catechesis* which mandates parishes to develop a systematic plan for the ministry of catechesis. To do this the parish needs to establish a team of individuals invested in the progress of faith formation to look at the parish mission, assess the current reality and write a plan of goals, objectives and strategies. The diocese is available to assist the parish in carrying out this process.

BUDGET

Budgeting and financial requirements are directed through the Diocesan Finance Department. Generally the parish drafts the overall parish budget and specified amounts are designated for faith formation programming. If there is no allocation to faith formation, it is recommended to advocate for it. Continuation of the faith is not possible without putting financial resources into it.

Possible categories to include in personal office budgeting include:

Income	Expenses	
Tuition/Registration Fee	Conferences/Inservices/Workshops/Meetings	Dues/Subscriptions
Fundraising	Food	Instructional Materials/Textbooks
Parish Allocation	Travel/Transportation	Printing/Photocopying
	Equipment/Office Supplies	Public Relations/Hospitality
	Postage/Shipping	Repairs/Maintenance

LEGAL

CATHOLIC CHURCH LAW

- *Canon Law* is the law of the Catholic Church.
- The bishop has final responsibility for all church law in his diocese. Although he may delegate power, he can never delegate responsibility.
- In the Diocese of Superior parishes are governed by a pastor who is the ultimate authority in the parish, subject only to the bishop.
- Church governance is not a democracy. One would hope that the pastor operates in a collegial spirit; however, he stands alone in a very sense under canon law in his ultimate responsibility for the decisions that guide the life of his parish.

Canons 773-780 pertain to Catechetical Instruction. Hi-lights of those *Canons* are:

Canon 774, §1 reiterates that all type of catechesis are under the supervision of legitimate ecclesiastical authority [the Bishop].

Canon 774, §2 states that parents above others are obliged to form their children by word and example in faith and in the practice of Christian life.

Canon 775, §1 presents an explicit directive by saying that "*it is for the diocesan bishop to issue norms for catechesis, to make provision that suitable instruments for catechesis are available, even by preparing a catechism, if it seems opportune, and to foster and coordinate catechetical endeavors.*"

Canon 776 exhorts pastors to provide for the catechetical formation of children and to *promote and foster the role of parents in family catechesis.*

Canon 777 enlists the pastor to take care in a special way that suitable catechesis is imparted for the celebration of the sacraments.

Canon 780 directs that the diocesan bishop is a supervisor of catechesis and he is to ensure that catechists are duly prepared to fulfill their function properly, and that they learn in theory and practice the methods proper to the teaching discipline.

PARENT RIGHTS

Parents are the primary educators in the faith of their children; therefore parishes and parents must work together for the good of the child. Parents have the right to expect...

- They will be able to present their concerns and discuss them in a respectful atmosphere,
- They will receive timely responses to written requests and phone calls,
- They will be encouraged to visit their children's classrooms,
- They will be notified of their children's formation and behavioral progress or lack thereof,
- Their children will be treated fairly,
- They will be promptly informed of any changes in rules and regulations.



PCL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER



“Be sure that you first preach by the way you live. If you do not, people will notice that you say one thing, but live otherwise, and your words will bring only cynical laughter and a derisive shake of the head.” ~ St. Charles Borromeo, Patron of Catechists

SHAPING A PROGRAM

A new PCL usually joins a parish program that is already established. The role of a professional PCL is to evaluate the program and facilitate the continued growth of this existing program. Continual evaluation and improvement of programs is a positive part of effective catechesis. Being able to recognize need for updating programming is important to the role of PCL. With the changing dynamics of the times and catechesis it is important to understand effective ways to design and implement new programs. “If you are patient, sensitive and reasonable you can usually take any good existing program and develop it into a better one.” (Reichert, p. 6)

Every parish program is unique with its own charisms and qualities. Good parish programs are designed to meet the needs of the families and parishioners it serves. Components of a comprehensive program include: (Reichert, p. 12-25)

- † A well-articulated vision
- † A well-designed curriculum
- † Developmentally appropriate design and methods
- † Based on needs assessments and implements ongoing evaluation
- † Respects the diverse needs of the parish community
- † Incorporates principles of good public relations
- † Utilizes all available current technology

Reichert, Richard. The Effective DRE: Developing A Parish Program. Loyola Press. 1998.

Program design options may consist entirely or in part of...

Traditional Classroom – a traditional educational setting with classrooms, desks, direct instruction and some discussion with children and youth. Usually a designated textbook is the resource used to instruct the curriculum.

Discipleship Ministry or Comprehensive Youth Ministry – faith is taught in a natural setting for children and youth, but incorporates catechesis throughout the events. The document Renewing the Vision lays out the guiding principles of this method.

Lectionary-based - a method of teaching the faith to children and adults that uses the Sunday Mass Scripture readings as the basis for catechetical sessions. Usually this is done in a traditional classroom style.

Mini-courses – a method of teaching the faith to children and adults that breaks catechetical material into courses. Usually this is done in a traditional classroom style.

Family-centered – this method either 1) teaches the families together as a group within a parish setting, 2) provides materials for families to teach their own children at home, or 3) provides traditional catechesis for the children with sessions set aside to invite the families into the parish to be catechized together.

Home-schooling – this method allows the parents to catechize their children in the home setting. It is either directed by the parish or by the parents.

Intergenerational (primary) – “community catechesis” whereby multiple generations of individuals from throughout the parish are invited to attend catechetical sessions together. If this is the only way in which children and youth receive catechesis, it would be considered primary.

Intergenerational (blended) - community catechesis” whereby multiple generations of individuals from throughout the parish are invited to attend catechetical sessions together. If this is a session once a month or every few months alternated with traditional catechesis or another form of child and youth catechesis, then this is considered blended.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd - involving adults and children in a common religious experience in which the religious values of childhood (contemplation and enjoyment of God) are predominant. This is a purchased, licensed program that requires training to implement.

Early Catholic Family Life – a parent-child centered program aimed at assisting parents seeking to pass the faith onto their children.

Programs for children with Special Needs - these programs can either be specifically designed for individual students to learn the faith or be adapted so they can participate with other parish offerings, or they can be group setting for children with special needs to learn about the faith at a level in which they can understand.

Summer catechetical – summer programming can take on different methods. Generally summer catechesis is offered as Vacation Bible School, Totus Tuus and/or Extreme Faith Camp. Summer catechetical can also be intensive or general catechesis offered to children, youth and adults in place of school year catechesis.

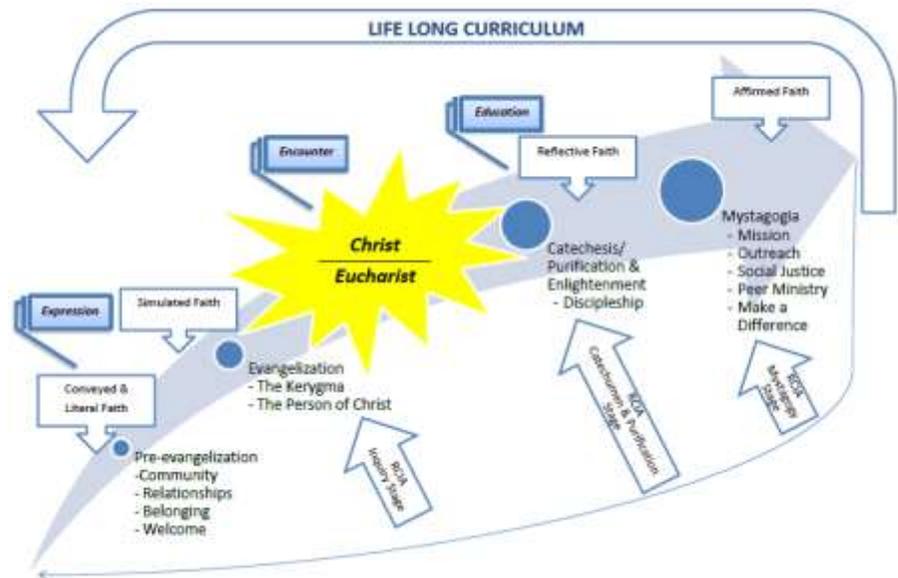
EVANGELIZATION & DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY

The “new” Evangelization is a process of formation and renewal for:

- 1) The baptized who no longer practice their faith
- 2) Those who have never heard the Gospel
- 3) Those who are strong and fervent in their faith

Popes since the Second Vatican Council emphasized the Church’s mission to be Christ to all people (*ad gentes*). We are called to help others have a conversion of heart. People need to know of and be to put the faith into the context of the culture of the times. Those being evangelized need to have experiences

of God’s saving Grace through sacraments, prayer, Scripture, Church teachings and traditions. We need to use methods of current times to bring people to the faith.



The Catholic faith is not something that is just personal. We shouldn’t keep it to ourselves. Christ set the example for us in reaching out to those who were seeking, marginalized and in despair. Many times in our Church history, we’ve flipped back and forth from teaching the doctrine in rote to reaching out and loving one another. Catechizing in the faith is not one of the other, but rather both and. It is important that while we reach out to others, we catechize them. But how do we know what to teach others? First and foremost, we, as individuals, need to be disciples of Christ. Too often we teach little children that a disciple of Christ is a follower of Christ. Though this is true, a disciple is more than just a follower, but one who learns, one who learns and shares, one who tries to find others to be disciples.

Christ said, in Matthew 28: 19-20 – “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.” He didn’t say, just follow me, but rather teach others. To be a good teacher, one needs to know what he or she is teaching. To be a “disciple” you must first learn about and be one with Christ. You must first be a disciple.

In our parish programs, it is important to teach traditional catechesis, but it is also extremely important to provide opportunity and settings where children, teens, young adults and adults the opportunity to be in community and share faith in a natural setting. Our faith does not simply exist within the church walls. Our faith is one that must be shared

outside, within our daily lives, at work, at school and at play. How do we teach people to share outside of church – we take them there, we meet them there, we lead by example.

We encourage all parishes to look at ALL their faith formation and religious education programs and offerings and weigh it against the journey to Emmaus.

1) Luke 24: 13-24: Jesus meets the two friends who are experiencing feelings of fear and dispersion, of lack of trust and dismay. They were fleeing. The force of death, the cross, had killed in them all hope. Jesus approaches them and walks with them. He listens to their conversation and says: "What matters are you discussing as you walk along?" The prevailing ideology prevents them from understanding and having a critical conscience. "Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free, but..." What do those who suffer talk about today? What matters today put our faith in a state of crisis? Do we approach people and listen to their reality and their problems? Are we, and those we serve, capable of asking questions that help us to look at reality more critically? Do we offer opportunity for small group discussions?

2) Luke 24:25-27: Jesus uses the Bible, not in order to give lessons on the Bible, but to shed light on the problem worrying the two friends, and thus shed light on the situation they were experiencing. With the help of the Bible, Jesus leads the two disciples into God's plan and shows them that God has not allowed history to go astray. Jesus does not use the Bible as an expert who knows everything, but as a companion who wishes to help his friends to remember things they had forgotten, namely, Moses and the Prophets. Jesus does not give his friends the feeling of being ignorant, but seeks to create an ambient within which they can remember and thus arouse their memory. With the help of the Bible, do we shed light on the situations and transform the cross into a symbol of life and hope? Do we catechize using every day experiences?

3) Luke 24: 28-32: The Bible alone does not open their eyes but makes their hearts burn! That which opens the eyes of the friends and allows them to discover the presence of Jesus is the sharing of the bread, the communitarian gesture, the celebration. As soon as they recognize Jesus, he disappears. And they then experience the resurrection; they are reborn and walk on their own. Jesus does not take over his friends' journey. He is not paternalistic. Now that they are risen, the disciples can walk on their own two feet. Do we create a prayerful and fraternal atmosphere where the Spirit is free to act? It is the Spirit who allows us to discover and experience the Word of God in our lives and leads us to understand the meaning of Jesus' words (Jn 14: 26, 16:13). Do we celebrate and share in community? Do we use large group settings for praise, worship and social community?

(The scripture contexts and reflections are taken directly from e-Lectio Divina, April 2017, distributed by the General Curia of the Carmelites in Rome, Italy)

CURRICULUM

The Diocese of Superior offers Curriculum Guidelines for Parish Religious Education Programs. The guidelines were updated in 2010 for grades K-12 in an effort to provide parishes with a list of criteria that could be achieved in a parish program that meets for approximately 24 hours per year. The Curriculum Guidelines are cross-referenced with the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). The guidelines are divided into five segments: 1) the goal, 2) the children/youth will learn to, 3) will understand that, 4) have the opportunity to and 5) parents are asked to. **The guidelines can be found on the diocesan website <http://catholicdos.org/religious-education-curriculum>.**

TEXTBOOKS

It is important to note that the textbook is not the sole source of catechesis. When a child is baptized, he/she enters a relationship with Jesus and becomes a member of the church community. At the same time, parents and the parish community including the parish catechists assume the responsibility to nurture the child's growth in faith. This shared responsibility continues until the child is ready to enter fully into the Church's life and mission at Confirmation.

Most major textbook publishers deal with the topics identified in the diocesan curriculum. However, no single textbook series follows the curriculum precisely. Therefore, to provide consistency and continuity in scope and sequence, it is best to use the same major textbook series with related support materials for each grade. In this way a majority of the curriculum will be covered. It is also important that the textbooks and resources chosen for instruction in the catechetical program are approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. **A**

conformity list is found on their website - <http://www.usccb.org/about/evangelization-and-catechesis/subcommittee-on-catechism/upload/Current-Conformity-List.pdf>

SPECIAL NEEDS

Parishes need to ensure that children, youth and adults are given an opportunity to learn and participate in the faith. It is the mission of the Church to offer opportunities in education and faith to as many children, youth and adults as we can. The Diocese of Superior has the GOAL (Growth Opportunities for All Learners) which offers: 1) a handbook and common forms to assist schools and religious education programs in working with all needs, 2) opportunities to collaboratively purchase resources and assessment tools, 3) professional development training for teachers and catechetical leaders to enhance local programming, and 4) opportunities for schools and parishes to pilot programs for those with special needs. Resources can be found at: <https://catholicdos.org/goal-program>.

INSTRUCTION

In these modern times, different modes of instruction are used. Always face-to-face has the largest impact, but with schedules and habits of individuals today other formats of instruction need to be considered including technological means. Instruction also needs to occur during human experiences. By offering human experiences such as retreats, service opportunities, prayer groups and Bible studies, catechists help individuals relate the message of Christ to their own lives.

In assisting catechists to be successful, direct them in some basic fundamentals...

- 1) Use personal prayer with the Holy Spirit to guide planning and instruction.
- 2) Study all material thoroughly before teaching it.
- 3) Reference the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Sacred Scripture and the Sunday readings.
- 4) Prepare meaningful prayer experiences at the beginning, end and during instruction.
- 5) Determine what concepts will need explanation and exploration.
- 6) Establish activities that are age appropriate and meaningful.
- 7) Give participants time to talk and ask questions about what they're learning.
- 8) Call the individuals to take what they learn into service. Give them examples how to live what they are learning.
- 9) Make sure all materials and resources are prepared prior to the instruction time.

Anslinger, Leisa. *Catechist's Companion: Tips for New Catechists*. Our Sunday Visitor. 2009.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

A successful catechetical program ensures that there is ample and concise communication with parents, students and catechists. Determine the means in which parents will most likely receive your information – currently the most effective means is email, Facebook or text. Communicate regularly and concisely. Parents will not take the time to read something that comes too often or is too wordy. Encourage catechists to communicate with parents about individual student achievements. This will help the parents to be involved with the catechetical process and also leave little room for questions.

SETTING CATECHISTS UP FOR SUCCESS

To help catechists, especially volunteers, to be successful in spreading the Word of God, it is important to prepare them for success. Areas to focus on are:

- † How to use prayer and what prayers to emphasize in the classroom
- † How to use the curriculum and textbooks - What's important to make sure you cover?
- † How to create a lesson plan, and stick to it
- † Classroom management strategies – seating charts, appropriate discipline
- † How to incorporate “real life” into the lessons
- † What are age appropriate activities and expectations for the students?
- † What are expectations for catechists?
- † What are the procedures and processes for basic things – attendance, bathroom breaks, emergency procedures, etc?
- † What catechetical certification opportunities does the parish provide to help increase and foster adult formation for the catechist?

As listed in the RTJ's Creative Catechist magazine September 2012 issue... *5 Best Tips to Help New Catechists*

1. Guide – create a handbook that guides the catechists
2. Expand – expand the catechists vision by inviting them to communicate with other catechists
3. Model – provide sample lesson plans, team teach with them or teach a lesson for them to give them an understanding of what to do
4. Mentor – create times for experienced catechists to meet with new catechists
5. Supervise – find time to observe their teaching and give them good feedback to encourage growth in their teaching

CATECHIST SUPERVISION

Even though the majority of catechists are volunteers, it is extremely important that they are supervised. The Catechetical Leader needs to make sure there is time to visit the classrooms and observe what is being taught and how it is being taught. Parents with concerns will ask questions, and the Catechetical Leader needs to ensure that the environment is safe and that learning of the faith is going on.

When observing, things to identify are:

Is there a lesson plan being followed?

Is there efficient classroom management and discipline?

Are the faith components being taught accurate and age appropriate?

Does the catechist show respect, care and moral teaching to the students?

Ensure the catechists at the beginning of the year, that you are there to assist them to make them the best catechist they can be. Inform them ahead of time that you will be observing to help them not to “grade them”. Also, with regular visits to the classrooms you will learn the habits of the students and be able to assist the catechists better when there are discipline issues.

Other items to look for to evaluate effectiveness of catechists and the entire program are observing if the catechist:

1. Serves as a positive Catholic role model.
2. Infuses Catholic values into the curriculum.
3. Models frequent prayer.
4. Incorporates liturgical themes.
5. Exerts a positive influence on the Catholic community.
6. Demonstrates continued growth and understanding of the Catholic faith.
7. Encourages student participation in community and parish ministries.
8. Creates a Catholic physical environment in the classroom.
9. Knows about the subject matter.
10. Demonstrates an ability to motivate children and youth.
11. Effectively plans and uses instructional time.
12. Creates an atmosphere where mutual respect and cooperative spirit are evident.

RECRUITMENT AND EVANGELIZATION

It may seem strange to ask a parish religious education program to recruit students, but with the growing changes in the Catholic Church and organized religion today, families are expecting to be invited to participate in faith formation. With this then, it is important for faith formation programs to establish sound programs with accurate teaching of the faith. Never should a faith formation program sacrifice its faith to make “others” happy. To recruit families and children to attend, faith formation programs need to let families know what they are doing, when they are offering classes, sessions and activities and how the families can benefit from this experience. The most popular ways to recruit today are through email, Facebook and texting.

With the understanding of evangelizations and that families need to be recruited to join faith formation programs, we can begin to use the vision of evangelization in our planning and program goals.

ADULT FORMATION

Of great importance to the Catholic faith is ensuring that adults continue to grow in knowledge of the faith. Too often confirmation is seen as a “graduation” – a time of being “done”! That is not true. Because of the mysterious nature of our faith and the vast amount of information one needs to know in order to put an understanding to the faith, adult level knowledge is key. One cannot come to know Christ without having lived experiences he/she can relate to Him. It is that adult experience that helps make the faith truly identifiable.

Adult Formation can come in many shapes and sizes. There can be classes for catechists, parents, multi-generations, sick and suffering, singles or any group imaginable. Adults today are hungry to know the faith – we need to provide a multitude of opportunities for them. We know that adults learn in a variety of ways – the classroom setting is not usually one of them. We need to get creative and provide opportunities for adult Catholic to spend time with each other – find communities within the parish communities.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Who are Youth? We define youth as adolescents or individuals who are transitioning from childhood to maturity, grades 7-12. How are Youth Called? All youth are a gift from God and carry special energies and talents. As Pope John Paul II said in an address to youth on January 26, 1999: "This is the time of your 'training', of your physical, emotional and spiritual development. But this does not mean that you can put off until later your meeting with Christ and your sharing in the Church's mission. Even though you are young, the time for action is now! Jesus does not have 'contempt for your youth'. He does not set you aside for a later time when you will be older and your training will be complete. Your training will never be finished. Christians are always in training."

The Office of Catholic Formation offers several youth ministry events throughout the course of the year. All of these events are intentionally designed not to be stand-alone events, but to be incorporated into our parishes' formation programs. If utilized in this way, these events can be very effective tools for discipling young people. Accordingly, to participate in any of these events, students must register with through their parishes and be accompanied by Safe Environment trained and background checked chaperones.

DIOCESAN YOUTH RALLIES – Our youth rallies are held at least once a year in various locations around the diocese. Every year St. Joseph's in Rice Lake offers a Youth Rally (typically during Lent) and the diocese offers at least one other rally somewhere else. The youth rally is our 'widest net' event and is great for beginning to break down the walls of the students: getting them outside the normal confines of their parishes and helping them to see the larger scope of our diocesan Church. The youth rally typically features a talk, a Mass (often celebrated by our bishop), and a short period of Eucharistic Adoration. The tone of the rally is always energetic and fun, with lively worship music and dynamic speakers.

EXTREME FAITH CAMP – Extreme Faith Camp (EFC) is a diocesan-run camp for junior high students offered in two locations each summer, the mission of which is to effect initial conversion in the lives of the campers. Camp is both a ton of fun and a very powerful time of encountering the Lord. Each day consists of typical summer camp adventures like canoeing, kayaking, camp games, hikes, etc. as well as Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, dynamic talks, Reconciliation and Eucharistic Adoration. A vital component of EFC is the leadership of the high school leaders. First time high school leaders spend the week on the Prayer Team, which consists of lots of intercessory prayer on the campers' behalf, but also talks on discipleship like prayer, scripture, conversion, etc. Returning high school leaders serve on the Extreme Team, which is responsible for running the small groups the junior high campers are divided into, mentoring the campers and modeling what it means to be a Catholic teen committed to a life of discipleship with Christ and the Church.

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP WEEKEND – High School Leadership Weekends (HSL) are held twice a year during the school year – one on each side of the diocese. These weekends are for teens wanting to delve deeper into a life of discipleship. Each weekend focuses on a particular theme of discipleship like prayer, Theology of the Body, Scripture, etc. and includes talks by a first-rate speaker, daily Mass, Adoration, games, small group time and more. The high school leaders at Extreme Faith Camp are required to attend a HSL Weekend each year.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE – The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is a national gathering of around 20,000 Catholic teens and Church leaders held every other November (odd years), typically in

Indianapolis. The office of Catholic Formation leads this four day pilgrimage of youth from our diocese, leaving around midnight on a Wednesday night and returning Sunday afternoon. NCYC can be an important experience of encountering Christ and His Body the Church. One of the keys with NCYC is recruiting good chaperones to lead the small groups of participants from each parish. Another key is preparing the students in advance to engage in the trip as a pilgrimage. Most of the teens that go and invest in the trip as a pilgrimage – entering into the prayer components and investing in the talks – tend to have a very powerful conversion experience.

MARCH FOR LIFE – Held every year in January on or around the anniversary of the tragic Roe V. Wade decision, the March for Life is a joyful national march of usually more than a million people in Washington D.C. in defense of life from conception to natural death. The trip put on by our office is a pilgrimage for life for high school students and chaperones. The final day of the pilgrimage all of our pilgrims attend the Students for Life of America Conference to learn about the Pro-Life cause and how they can be active supporters of life at home. Any high school students serious about praying for and marching on behalf of life are welcome to attend. Thanks to the pilgrimage components of daily Mass, prayer, Reconciliation and Adoration, coupled with the educational components about the sanctity of all human life the March for Life can be a very powerful and important conversion experience for teens if richly invested in.

TOTUS TUUS – Totus Tuus is summer program organized by our diocese that recruits, trains and sends out teams of college-age missionaries to put on catechetical camps at parishes across the diocese. Each week the Totus Tuus team (consisting of two men and two women) spends their days putting on a very engaging and very solidly Catholic Vacation Bible School for grade school children and their evenings teaching and building relationships with junior high and high school students. Every year the curriculum is based on one of the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and one of the four sets of mysteries of the Rosary. Since the team puts the whole week of programming on, Totus Tuus is a very easy jumpstart for youth ministry at parishes. Whether your parish has 100+ youth or just a few dozen, Totus Tuus is a great opportunity for brining young people of all ages to Christ and the beautiful gifts we have at our fingertips as Catholics.

OTHER EVENTS – These are the large events hosted by the diocese, but there are other events that many of our successful youth ministry programs utilize to punctuate their formation programs like Steubenville Youth Conferences for high school students, NET Ministries retreats and youth rallies (called Lifeline), mission trips, and more. Our office is more than happy to work with parishes to build an integrated youth ministry plan. Just give us a call or shoot us an email!

PCL AS SPIRITUAL LEADER

“Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” ~ Luke 14:27



A CATECHETICAL SPIRIT

Being a catechist is much more than preparing lessons, finding a DVD to watch or getting supplies for the classroom. In order to truly carry out the catechetical mission of the church, one needs to have catechetical spirituality. To obtain this spirituality, one needs to be open to God’s action and grace in his/her life.

The characteristics of catechetical spirituality are:

1. You are called.
2. You are willing to witness
3. You represent the Church
4. You are a witness to community
5. You are willing to serve
6. You are willing to learn

What is your catechetical spirit?

1. Is it grounded in the life of the Trinity?
2. Does the Word of God form and inform my spirit?
3. Am I a grateful person?
4. Am I a sacramental person?
5. Am I a Eucharistic person?
6. Am I aware that I belong to a community of faith?
7. Am I faithful to God and to the Church?
8. Am I generous, open and welcoming?
9. Am I a person of prayer?
10. Do I both seek and offer forgiveness?
11. Do I strive to be a peaceful and just person?
12. Do I see my own home and family as the Church?
13. Am I a joyful person?

All the above taken from Called to Be a Catechist, National Society of Volunteer Catechists, Pflaum Publishing, 2005, p. 11-15.

RELIGIOUS CERTIFICATION



Standards for catechists and personnel in parish catechesis are located on the diocesan website - <https://catholicdos.org/forming-effective-disciples>.

In 2013 the certification program got a new name and requirements. ***Forming Effective Disciples (F.E.D.)*** is required for all catechetical leaders and catechists. If you have specific questions regarding certification contact the Director of Catholic Formation or Kathy Drinkwine (1-715-394-0216).

The term “catechetical leaders” include Principals, Directors of Religious Education, Coordinators of Religious Education and Youth Ministers.

The term “catechist” includes individuals that teach religion at least one hour a week in a parish religious education or Catholic school setting.

The term “teacher” includes any individual contracted to teach in a Catholic school.

Catechetical leaders and catechists are expected to be Catholics who have admission to the full sacramental life of the Church and are actively engaged in a Catholic parish community.

Teachers and catechists are expected to hold *Foundation* Catechist Certification *within three years* of their start date.

All catechetical leaders (school or parish programs) and catechists in Catholic schools have *Elevated* Catechist Certification *within eight years* of their start date.

THE LITURGICAL YEAR
CLASSROOM AND ALL-PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Advent - The liturgical season of four weeks devoted to preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas (CCC 524).

- † Celebrated in December
- † Dec. 6 – Memorial of St. Nicholas
- † Dec. 8 – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (Holy Day of Obligation)
- † Dec. 12 – Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Patroness of the Americas)



- Advent Calendars within the classrooms counting down the days until Christmas – offering prayers, gifts and/or rewards.
- All-grade prayer services each week celebrating a theme of Advent for each week.
- Have St. Nicholas visit. Read, view, enjoy the story of St. Nicholas and his good deeds.
- Attend Mass on the Immaculate Conception.
- Pray the Rosary as a large group on the Immaculate Conception and Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- Prepare and practice for a Christmas Program.
- Collect gifts/food/clothing for the needy.
- Advent wreaths within the classrooms.
- Reconciliation

Christmas - The feast of the Nativity, the birth of Jesus (CCC 1171).

- † Begins on Christmas Eve and is celebrated through the Epiphany
- † Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve
- † Dec. 25 – Christmas Day (Holy Day of Obligation)
- † Dec. 31 – Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- † Jan. 1 – Solemnity of Mary Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation)
- † Jan. 6 – Epiphany



- Have an Epiphany Pageant rather than a Christmas Program.
- Nativity scene in the hallway and/or individual classrooms.
- Keep Christmas decorations present until the Epiphany

Ordinary Time – The name given to the weeks in the course of the year which celebrate no particular moment or aspect of Christian mystery, but rather the fullness of our faith.

- † Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
- † Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

- Catechetical Week is celebrated in February. Many activities and promotional events for the school are held.

Lent – A penitential season of forty weekdays that prepare for Easter (CCC 540, 1438)

- † Ash Wednesday (Day of Fasting)
- † March 19 – Solemnity of St. Joseph
- † March 26 – Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord



- Attend Mass on Ash Wednesday and receive the Ashes.
- Set a time aside to pray the Stations of the Cross.
- Hold a prayer service with a designated theme for Lent.
- Perform service projects for those in need.
- Have students give up something or do something more as a sacrifice for Lent.
- No meat is eaten on Fridays.
- Reconciliation

Holy Week - The week proceeding Easter, beginning with Palm (Passion) Sunday, called the "Great Week" in the liturgies of the Eastern Churches. It marks the Church's annual celebration of the events of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, culminating in the Paschal Mystery (CCC 1169).

† Palm Sunday

Triduum

- † Holy Thursday Night
- † Good Friday of the Lord's Passion
- † Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil



- Hold a Seder Meal to commemorate the Passover/Last Supper
- Pray the Stations of the Cross

Easter - The greatest and oldest Christian feast, which celebrates Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Easter is the "feast of feasts", the solemnity of solemnities, the "Great Sunday". Christians prepare for it during Lent and Holy Week, and catechumens usually receive the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil (CCC 1169; cf. 647).

- † Solemnity of the Ascension (Holy Day of Obligation)
- † Pentecost (Holy Day of Obligation)



- May is the "Month of Mary"
- Pray the Rosary
- Hold a May Crowning
- Hold a prayer service for the Unborn

Ordinary Time – The name given to the weeks in the course of the year which celebrate no particular moment or aspect of Christian mystery, but rather the fullness of our faith.

- † Feast of the Visitation
- † August 15 – Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary
- † September 8 – Feast of the Birth of Mary
- † October 2 – Memorial of the Guardian Angels
- † November 1 – All Saints' Day (Holy Day of Obligation)
- † November 2 – All Souls' Day



- October is the month of the Rosary.
- Pray the Rosary
- Pray a decade of the Rosary within the classrooms.
- Have students dress up as Saints.
- Pray the Angelus
- Opening prayer as a large group

