

**CATECHETICAL LEADERS  
HANDBOOK  
Revised May, 2016  
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## **I. General Information**

**Note: for the sake of consistency in this document, PCLs, DREs, CRE's and school religion administrators are referred to as catechetical leaders**

### **Introduction**

The Catechetical Ministry of the Church is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. The chief catechist, the Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, is assisted in this ministry by priests and catechists serving in the diocese. Priests and catechists must share a common vision and understanding of their role and ministry in order to develop effective catechetical programs. This common vision is in agreement with the vision of both the General and National Directories for Catechesis. The Diocesan Office of Christian Formation serves to coordinate this ministry.

### **General Directory for Catechesis**

The object of the *General Directory for Catechesis* is to provide those fundamental theological-pastoral principles drawn from the Church's Magisterium, particularly those inspired by the Second Vatican Council, which are capable of better orienting and coordinating the pastoral activity of the ministry of the word and, concretely, catechesis. The basic intention of the Directory is to offer reflections and principles, rather than immediate applications or practical directives. (GDC #9)

The concrete application of these principles and pronouncements by means of guidelines, national, regional or diocesan directories, catechisms and other ways deemed suitable for the effective promotion of catechesis is something which pertains to the specific competence of the various Episcopates. (GDC # 9)

### **National Directory for Catechesis**

The *National Directory for Catechesis* is an official document of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. It has been reviewed and approved by the Congregation for the Clergy according to the norms established in the *General Directory for Catechesis* and the apostolic constitution *Pastor Bonus*. (NDC # 7)

## **Diocesan Office of Christian Formation Mission Statement**

**The Office of Christian Formation promotes the development of mature faith, nurtures the response of believers to the Word, assists parishes and schools to elicit and form leaders for the ministry of catechesis and sacramental preparation, and encourages evangelization strategies.**

### **Goals**

- ❖ To center all catechetical endeavors on the mission of Christ in order to "...put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ..." (NDC #19B)
- ❖ To promote the incorporation of the tasks of catechesis into parish and Catholic school programs. These tasks include: knowledge of the faith, knowledge of the meaning of Liturgy and the sacraments, moral formation, prayer, and participating actively in the life and mission of the Church (NDC #20).
- ❖ To provide resources for the recruitment and training of catechetical personnel, the selection of textbooks, the development of curriculum, R.C.I.A., and sacramental preparation programs.
- ❖ To provide consultation on catechetical matters to parishes and schools, especially by site visits.
- ❖ To research and propose catechetical models that can be adapted to the needs of particular areas, parishes, or schools.
- ❖ To collaborate with Catholic colleges and universities to establish theologically and academically sound programs of preparation of catechetical personnel.
- ❖ To provide assistance in the evaluation of parish catechetical programs, using instruments that measure cognitive, affective, and behavioral objectives.
- ❖ To keep catechetical personnel informed concerning important church documents and recommendations that pertain to catechesis and evangelization.

### **Purposes of the Handbook**

The purposes of this Handbook are threefold:

1. To assist catechetical leaders in becoming aware of the full scope of their tasks.
2. To give practical administrative tips that will help the catechetical leader carry out her/his task.
3. To provide a vision for Catechetical Ministry in the parish which parallels the dynamic of the Gospel message.

## **II: Call to Ministry**

By Baptism each of us has a responsibility to pass on our heritage of faith.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do you light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.(Matt. 5: 14-16)

### **COLLABORATIVE ROLE IN THE CATECHETICAL MINISTRY**

The following quotation from the National Directory for Catechesis emphasizes the collaborative roles of clergy, religious, and laity in assisting the bishop in his catechetical ministry:

Catechesis is a collaborative effort within the diocese, under the direction of the local apostle, the bishop, who is specifically responsible for the transmission of the Faith in the particular Church entrusted to him. Assisting the bishop in his catechetical responsibility are his priests, deacons, religious, and laity, who act in a collaborative fashion according to their roles within the Church.

In addition to devoting himself personally to the proclamation of the Gospel and the ministry of catechesis, the bishop is also to supervise the catechetical mission in the diocese.

The bishop does not, therefore, work alone. He works with his priests and through those whom he appoints to assist him in his diocesan catechetical department.

In his designation of others as teachers and catechists, the bishop should vigilantly ensure that they proclaim the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ and hand on the complete and accurate deposit of faith. (NDC # 54)

## DEFINING THE ROLE OF A CATECHETICAL LEADER

Note: Job titles are contingent upon education, experience, and salary. The size of the parish may also be a deciding factor.

### JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE PCL

Title: Parish Catechetical Leader

Professional Status: Full time, paid staff member

Professional Preparation: **Required:** Graduate degree in religious education (MRE), Pastoral Studies (MPS), or a graduate degree in Theology. Certified Catechist, Advanced Catechist and DRE certification by the Office of Christian Formation.

Experience: At least five years of teaching experience and

- ❖ Advanced Training in methodology
- ❖ Experience in leadership and administration
- ❖ Oral and written communication skills
- ❖ Advanced computer skills

Basic Function: To direct the religious education/catechesis of the parish community for all age groups and all cultures by involving, training, working with and coordinating the efforts of catechetical personnel.

Accountability: The PCL is accountable to the pastor and to the parish council.

Accountable to This Position: Elementary Coordinator, Junior High Coordinator, Adolescent Catechesis Coordinator, Sacramental Program/s Coordinator/s, RCIA Coordinator, Whole Parish Catechesis Coordinator, Summer Bible School Coordinator, Home Schooling Coordinator, Summer Religious Education Program Coordinator, Religious Education Secretary.  
Note: If there are no coordinators, catechists are directly responsible to the PCL.

Specific Responsibilities of this Position:

1. Plans, supervises, and evaluates all religious education/catechetical efforts of parish in accord with parish and diocesan policies.
2. Recruits and trains adequate personnel to provide leadership for catechetical programs and coordinates their efforts.
3. Evaluates coordinators at least once a year and offers constructive suggestions for improvement.
4. Provides regular in-services to train volunteers in the methods of catechesis, and in the use of materials to be employed in their teaching.
5. Supervises the development of curriculum in keeping with the guidelines of the Diocese of Lafayette
6. Supervises and monitors the development of the annual religious education budget for pastoral approval.

7. Attends parish staff meetings. Communicates and cooperates with all parish staff and other ministries.
8. Articulates the vision of religious education within the parish community and recommends policy changes to the pastor and parish council.
9. Keeps current of trends and issues in religious education/catechesis by attending workshops and personal study.
10. Attends diocesan study days and conferences.
11. Supervises Religious Education Office: ordering materials, budgeting, record keeping, communications, etc.
12. Provides periodic spiritual enrichment and community-building experiences (evenings of reflection, appreciation dinners, etc.) that promotes the sense of Christian community among catechists.
13. Develops a parent handbook of religious education policies (registration, attendance, discipline, evaluation processes, sacramental preparation procedures, etc.)
14. Develops a comprehensive calendar of all aspects of the catechetical program and coordinates this with program coordinators and the parish's master calendar.
15. Supervises the reservation of facilities needed to conduct the catechetical programs; oversees the proper use and maintenance of these facilities.
16. Supervises the maintenance of accurate record keeping related to registration, attendance and student evaluations, as well as any required documentation related to sacramental preparation and celebration.
17. Training of catechetical personnel, students and parents in the Diocese of Lafayette "Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People" program.

## JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE DRE

Title: Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Professional Status: Full or part time, paid staff member

Professional Preparation: **Preferred:** Undergraduate college degree preferably in education  
**Required:** Catechist, Advanced Catechist and DRE Certification by the Office of Christian Formation Certification Process

Experience: At least five years of teaching experience

- ❖ Basic training in methodology
- ❖ Some experience in leadership and administration
- ❖ Oral and written communication skills
- ❖ Basic computer skills

Basic Function: To direct the religious education/catechesis of the parish community for several age groups and cultures by coordinating the efforts of catechetical personnel.

Accountability: The DRE is accountable to the pastor and to the parish council and, when appropriate, to the Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL).

Accountable to This Position: Coordinators of specific catechetical programs, religious education secretary and all catechists.

### Specific Responsibilities of this Position:

1. Plans, supervises, and evaluates specified religious education/catechetical efforts of parish in accord with parish and diocesan policies.
2. Recruits and trains adequate personnel to provide leadership for catechetical programs and coordinates their efforts.
3. With the assistance of the diocesan Office of Christian Formation, provides regular in-services to train volunteers in the methods of catechesis, and in the use of materials to be employed in their teaching.
4. Supervises the development of curriculum in keeping with the guidelines of the Diocese of Lafayette
5. Supervises the development of the annual religious education budget for pastoral approval and monitors that budget.
6. Attends parish staff meetings. Communicates and cooperates with all parish staff and other ministries.
7. Articulates the vision of religious education within the parish community and recommends policy changes to the pastor and parish council.
8. Keeps current of trends and issues in religious education/catechesis by attending workshops and personal study.
9. Attends diocesan study days and conferences.
10. Supervises Religious Education Office: ordering materials, budgeting, record keeping, communications, etc.
11. Provides periodic spiritual enrichment and community-building experiences (evenings of reflection, appreciation dinners, etc.) that promotes the sense of Christian community among catechists.

12. Develops a parent handbook of religious education policies (registration, attendance, discipline, evaluation processes, sacramental preparation procedures, etc.)
13. Develops a comprehensive calendar of all aspects of the catechetical program and coordinates this with the parish's master calendar.
14. Supervises the reservation of facilities needed to conduct the catechetical programs; oversees the proper use and maintenance of these facilities.
15. Supervises the maintenance of accurate record keeping related to registration, attendance and student evaluations, as well as any required documentation related to sacramental preparation and celebration.
16. Training of catechetical personnel, students and parents in the Diocese of Lafayette "Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People" program.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION OF A CRE**

Title: Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE)

Professional Status: Part-time paid or volunteer staff member.

Professional Preparation: Catechist and Advanced Catechist Certification from the Office of Christian Formation Certification Process or, at least, working toward those certifications.

Basic Function: To coordinate the religious education/catechesis efforts for a specified group by involving, training, and working with various volunteer personnel of the parish community.

Accountability: The CRE is accountable to the parish catechetical leader (PCL) or parish director of religious education (DRE), and the pastor.

Accountable to this position: Catechists who are working within the specified group that is assigned to the CRE.

Specific responsibilities of this position:

1. In collaboration with the PCL or DRE and pastor, plans and supervises a specific program of religious education in the parish in accord with parish and diocesan policies.
2. With the assistance of the PCL or DRE, encourages and conducts the training of personnel to properly carry out the program objectives for the particular group or age level
3. Collaborates with other parish religious education coordinators and reports on accomplishments and needs.
4. Under the guidance of the PCL or DRE, evaluates catechists/personnel at least once a year and offers constructive suggestions for their improvement.
5. Accepts assignments of a special nature that can be mutually agreed upon with the PCL or DRE and the pastor.
6. Has the desire to further his/her own education through various modes of self-study, reading, formal classes, and by attending workshops, conferences, retreats, and spiritual growth days which are sponsored by the Office of Christian Formation.
7. Encourages catechists to attend workshops, conferences, retreats, and spiritual growth days which are sponsored by the Office of Christian Formation.
8. Attends parish religious education staff meetings.
9. Communicates and cooperates with all parish staff and other ministries.
10. Assists the PCL or DRE in providing periodic spiritual enrichment and community building experiences (evenings of reflection, appreciation dinners, etc.) that promote a sense of Christian community among catechists.
11. Assists the PCL or DRE in developing a parent handbook of religious education policies (registration, attendance, discipline, evaluation processes, sacramental preparation procedures, etc.)
12. Participates in developing a comprehensive calendar of all aspects of the catechetical programs.
13. Maintains accurate records related to their specific area of ministry.

## Relationship with Diocesan Office of Christian Formation

The Bishop directs catechesis through the Office of Christian Formation and other diocesan offices with a catechetical component.

I. The Office of Christian Formation provides:

A. In-Services:

1. Diocesan study days for catechist certification
2. Diocesan and regional workshops and retreats for certification
3. Consultation and In-Service on request
4. Diocesan meetings for catechetical leaders

B. Guidelines and Policies:

1. Catechist, Advanced Catechist, Director of Religious Education (parish) and Certified Religion Administrator (school) certification guidelines
2. Sacramental Policies and Guidelines
3. Administrative suggestions e.g., Catechetical Leader's Handbook
4. Textbook policy
5. Textbook Evaluation Guidelines
6. Resource for catechetical documents e.g. General Catechetical Directory, National Catechetical Directory, Catechesi Tradendae, etc.

C. Support Services:

1. Gatherings for prayers and sharing
2. Individual parish visitation
3. Resource library of textbooks and catechetical materials
4. Safe Environment Resource Library

D. Instruments for Staff Development:

1. Catechist Certification Process
2. Evaluation Criteria
3. University of Dayton Institute for Pastoral Initiatives online program
4. Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension Program

II. The Office of Christian Formation requests:

A. Annual Report

B. Surveys – these are sent as needed

C. Participation in diocesan meetings for catechetical leaders

D. Participation in the Catechist Certification Process. Go to [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org) for copies of the certification process.

1. All catechists should work toward obtaining diocesan certification
2. Catechetical leaders are to oversee the formation of catechists
  - ❖ Applications for the awarding of certificates for the different levels of certification are to be mailed to the Office of Christian Formation as catechists complete each level.

## Relationship with the Parish Catechists

### **The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:**

While not being formally identified with them, catechesis is built on a certain number of elements of the Church's pastoral mission which have a catechetical aspect, that prepare for catechesis, or spring from it. They are: the initial proclamation of the Gospel or missionary preaching to arouse faith; examination of the reasons for belief; experience of Christian living; celebration of the sacraments; integration into the ecclesial community; and apostolic and missionary witness. (CCC #6)

### **The National Directory for Catechesis states:**

So catechesis comprises six fundamental tasks, each of which is related to an aspect of faith in Christ. All efforts in evangelization and catechesis should incorporate these tasks.

1. Catechesis promotes **knowledge of the faith**.
2. Catechesis promotes **knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the sacraments**.
3. Catechesis promotes **moral formation** in Jesus Christ.
4. Catechesis teaches the Christian **how to pray** with Christ.
5. Catechesis prepares the Christian to **live in community** and to **participate actively** in the life and mission of the Church.
6. Catechesis promotes a **missionary spirit** that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society. (NDC # 20)

### **Recruiting**

Recruiting and keeping catechists involves planning. The catechetical leader, therefore, must have a vision of those qualities necessary for fulfilling the responsibilities required of a catechist. The catechetical leader should also have in hand a statement of the support a prospective catechist can expect from the catechetical leader in order to enhance his/her ministry. The following points will assist the catechetical leader in recruiting persons for the catechetical ministry.

### **SUPPORT for the parish catechists:**

#### **The Catechetical Leader (PCL, DRE or CRE)**

- ❖ conducts an orientation to outline the specifics of the particular grade level and how it fits into the whole program.
- ❖ provides the catechist with a Teacher's Manual for the grade level taught and explains how to use it.
- ❖ supplies the catechist with copies of lesson planning forms and gives assistance in filling out the forms.
- ❖ gives the catechist a listing of resources from the parish and diocesan office that can be used to supplement textbook material.
- ❖ informs the catechist of various times for community building activities.
- ❖ gives the catechists a schedule of classes, in-services and special events, happening both on parish and diocesan levels, for the upcoming year.
- ❖ encourages the catechist to share experiences, both positive and negative.

### **EVALUATION of the parish catechist:**

An evaluation is a means to determine how each person can be challenged to grow as a person and as a catechist in a particular parish religious education program. The evaluation interview provides the catechetical leader with the opportunity to recognize the gifts and talents a catechist brings to the parish catechetical ministry. The evaluation takes place between the catechist and the catechetical leader in a positive and friendly atmosphere. (see section VII, for evaluation instruments)

## PERSONAL TIME MANAGEMENT

Burnout is common among catechetical leaders. To avoid burnout and to be an effective leader, planning a schedule to include time for the following items is essential to good time management.

- ❖ Family obligations
- ❖ Daily prayer and reflection
- ❖ Professional reading
- ❖ Regular days off
- ❖ Getting together with other catechetical leaders
- ❖ Professional in-service days
- ❖ Spending time with the parish team
- ❖ Getting to know the people you serve
- ❖ Retreats, vacations, workshops

A few planning tips:

- Annually** Before too many programs begin to fill up your calendar, take time to plan your personal calendar.
- Monthly** Mark one day a month as your planning day.
- Weekly** Each Friday, check that week's schedule for unfinished business and reschedule it for the next week.
- Daily** Take 10 minutes at the end of the day to check the schedule for the next day and list everything that must be accomplished. Include personal time.

The next morning, check your prioritized list, do what has to be done beginning with number one. If you don't get everything done, don't worry... your most important work has been accomplished. Place your unfinished work on tomorrow's list.

Note: Personal work should not always be last on your prioritized list. Taking time for yourself is not selfish – it enables you to keep going and to face the people around you in a peaceful attitude. Don't be a martyr! Most martyrs cause others to suffer as well.

Some basic needs:

Every director and coordinator needs work space. Some of the items needed in that work space include:

- ❖ Desk, phone, files, shelving for books, cupboards for supplies, etc.
- ❖ Large table for either meetings and/or to be used as a work table
- ❖ Comfortable chairs for conferences
- ❖ Coffee pot and supplies for meetings, visitors, etc.
- ❖ Basic office supplies: paper, pencils, pens, ruler, stapler, tape, etc.
- ❖ Computer and printer
- ❖ Copier
- ❖ A just salary and adequate benefits

In addition, a catechetical leader is able to accomplish much in the workspace if he/she has a dependable secretary or shares some of the time of the parish secretary. In some parishes, a part-time volunteer secretary would be adequate.

### **III Total Parish Program for Religious Education**

#### **STRUCTURING THE TOTAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The structuring of the Total Religious Education program of a parish begins with the Catechetical Team. This team is separate from the Parish Council.

**The agenda of the committee includes:**

- ❖ Determine needs
- ❖ Judge priorities
- ❖ Approve and support programs
- ❖ Determine an overall budget for the total religious education program of the parish

**Composition of a Catechetical Team includes:**

- ❖ A priest representative
- ❖ The catechetical leader
- ❖ Representatives of all leadership groups involved in total religious education
- ❖ Interested members selected from the parish at large e.g., parents, catechists, etc.

**Note:** The catechetical leader is a member of and possible resource to the team or committee, but not its chairperson.

It is vital that parishioners be on the team or committee to choose and implement the programs and activities selected. The more people are involved in the decision making and implementation steps, the more successful the religious education, catechesis effort will be.

The work of the Catechetical Team is summarized under the following categories:

#### **Self Development**

Each member must become familiar with:

- ❖ National Directory for Catechesis, especially Chapter 9. *Organizing Catechetical Ministry*
- ❖ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- ❖ Functions, methods and trends in religious education
- ❖ The present parish situation – its strengths, weaknesses, needs, etc.

#### **Cooperation**

The Catechetical Team should foster cooperation between members of the education groups and other segments of the parish. It is vital that the sacramental team work closely with the Liturgical Committee. It is also urgent that those responsible for the parish religious education and those responsible for the religious education of Catholic school children coordinate activities in as many ways as possible.

#### **Communication**

The regular meetings of the Catechetical Team are the ideal place for those representing the other education groups within the parish to communicate with each other, thus avoiding conflicts in goals, vision, calendars, etc.

# PLANNING/GOAL SETTING FOR THE TOTAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

To insure a quality catechetical program, it is essential that the Catechetical Team along with the catechetical staff meet together to set goals and plan for their accomplishment.

## BUDGETING

A great deal of frustration can be avoided if the religious education program adheres to a specified and approved system of funding. A detailed budget, listing expenditures for salaries, benefits and programs will be advantageous to all. The catechetical leader will know exactly how much can be spent on certain items and will be able to constantly monitor expenditures. The pastor will know the maximum amount of funds that need to be drawn from the total parish income.

### A Religious Education Budget Worksheet

#### Personnel Expenses

Include for each person the following: Salary, Benefits, Conferences, In-Service, Travel

- catechetical leader
- Coordinators for various levels
- Catechists
- Secretarial help
- Custodial staff

Personnel Expenses Total \_\_\_\_\_

#### Office Expenses

- Rent
- Telephone
- Utilities
- Postage
- Equipment purchases
- Stationery and supplies
- Printing
- Repairs and maintenance of equipment

Office Expenses Total \_\_\_\_\_

#### Program Expenses

Include each level such as Pre-school, Grades K-6, Jr. High, Sr. High, Adults, Special Ed., Sacraments, RCIA, Summer Programs, Whole Community Catechesis, other.

- Textbooks
- AV rental expenses
- Catechist resource material
- teaching supplies
- Retreats, training activities
- Refreshments
- Guest speakers

Program Expenses Total \_\_\_\_\_

#### Projected Income

Include all level programs as above.

- Registration fees
- Sale of textbooks
- Donations
- Other

Projected Income Total \_\_\_\_\_

## **POLICIES/HANDBOOK**

A religious education handbook for parents serves as an indispensable tool for communicating the policies, philosophy, goals, and procedures of a religious education program. Parishes should develop a comprehensive and systematic handbook for parents.

In order to create a handbook, it is strongly recommended that people familiar with parish programs and procedures serve on a handbook committee.

Handbooks can be a perfect way to communicate the information that families need for full participation in religious education programs. Only the individual parish can make the handbook personal enough to meet the needs of its families. Keep in mind that the tone with which a handbook is written reflects the approachability of the parish staff.

The society in which we live today demands that we consider legal issues as well as educational and pastoral concerns. Policies and procedures noted in the handbook will further support the staff in possible difficult administrative decisions.

If the religious education program is bilingual or multilingual, the handbook should be written in all languages that are appropriate. It is important to provide clear and consistent communication to all parishioners.

The following items should be considered for inclusion in a handbook: introductory letter, parish mission statement/catechetical plan, names and positions of religious education personnel, addresses, and phone numbers of parish offices, curriculum, sacramental policies for Baptism, First Penance, First Eucharist, Confirmation, Adult Confirmation, and RCIA.

Clear policies for the running of the religious education program should also be included in the handbook such as: registration for all programs, attendance, arrival and dismissal, communication with parents, emergency class cancellation, fire safety and disaster preparation, health concerns and medication, child abuse, expectations for parents, students, catechists, volunteers, discipline and problem solutions, off-campus activities, retreats, service projects, field trips, a reserve the right to amend section, and a parent acknowledgement form.

## **LEGAL ISSUES**

It is recommended that every parish have on hand a copy of Mary Angela Shaugnessy's book *RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, PARISH AND YOUTH MINISTRY, Legal Issues for Catechetical and Youth Leaders*. Mary Angela Shaugnessy, SCN, J.D., PhD. National Catholic Education Association, Copyright 2006, [www.ncea.org](http://www.ncea.org) (\$21) ISBN 1-55833-381-9.

## CURRICULUM AND SELECTING TEXTBOOKS/RESOURCES

For information on curriculum and textbook selection please refer to the Diocese of Lafayette Guidelines for Choosing Catechetical Textbooks which may be found on the diocesan website [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org), Christian Formation or call the Office of Christian Formation for more information.

For information on which textbooks and series have been found to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, go to [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org), offices, evangelization and catechesis, subcommittee on Catechism, conformity list.

## RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF CLASSES/HOURS PER YEAR

When scheduling classes in the religious education program, the DRE should keep in mind the number of lessons/chapters in the student textbooks. Ordinarily, each lesson/chapter in textbooks designed for use in parishes is written to fill one hour or more. ***Therefore, in order to adequately cover the curriculum, it is recommended that the class schedule correlate the number of classes/hours to the number of lessons/chapters in the textbook. Under no circumstances should the schedule of classes be less than 24 hours.*** This schedule does not include extra activities such as penance services, practices, special celebrations, masses. Although these extra activities may be included on the schedule they should be scheduled beyond the core 24 hours of actual lessons from the textbook.

## **IV The Parish Catechist**

### **RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

When volunteers are needed to staff a program, the director gathers a team for recruiting. Team members should:

- pray for guidance
- gather a team around you
- peruse parish lists with the parish staff
- phone prospective volunteers and set up an appointment and, at their convenience, meet the prospective volunteer with a positive, cheerful attitude, having a packet prepared with what will be expected of them, some background material, and in-service suggestions
- if someone says no, don't drop them from your list. Ask again next year and the year after.
- Sometimes it takes a while for a potentially great catechist to accept the invitation.
- Adding a list of volunteer positions needed to the end of program registration forms can be a means of allowing family members to check off those positions that they feel comfortable filling. However, a procedure for screening volunteer candidates is always important.

Once you have your volunteers, you should:

- get to know each volunteer as a person
- have regular staff meetings in which the volunteers have time to share success and concerns
- create times for praying together
- let them know you are working with them
- encourage them to become diocesan certified catechists

Keep a file on your volunteers. The file should include copies of their "Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People" training certificates and a record card or computer file for each volunteer that includes:

- Name
- Address
- Phone (Home, Work and Cell)
- Birthday
- Employment
- Hobbies
- Interests
- Talents/Gifts
- Philosophy of Religious Education
- Names, ages, etc., of family members

A great guide for selecting and coordinating volunteers is the *Coordinator of Volunteers Quick Guide* published by Catholic Mutual and Office of Risk Management, Diocese of Lafayette.

#### **QUALITIES to look for in a catechist:**

1. Practices the Catholic faith.
2. Knows and supports the teaching of the Catholic Church.
3. Shows a concern for ongoing personal spiritual growth.
4. Maintains a positive attitude in relating to others.
5. Holds diocesan certification for teaching religion or is willing to work toward it.
6. Can relate well to the assigned age level.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR PARISH CATECHISTS**

### **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The catechist under the direction of the catechetical leader, will provide quality instruction to the students at the grade level assigned. Being aware of the call to proclaim the Good News, the catechist will enrich and guide the spiritual formation of the students by witnessing as a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

### **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. Class Planning:**

1. Cooperates with the catechetical leader in implementing the goals and objectives of the parish program of religious education.
2. Observes parish guidelines for using resource material.
3. Makes arrangements with parish director for using diocesan resources.
4. Requests needed supplies from the catechetical leader.
5. Prepares weekly lesson plans using the appropriate form.
6. Participates in Safe Environment training each year as required.

#### **B. Classroom Management:**

1. Is punctual for each class.
2. Notifies the catechetical leader when there is a need to be absent.
3. Arranges teaching area to be attractive, orderly and conducive to learning.
4. Greets students as they enter the classroom.
5. Establishes routine procedures for carrying out instructional process.
6. Sets few, simple and clear rules of discipline.
7. Follows through and is consistent in rules of discipline.
8. Is firm, but kind, to students.
9. Leaves teaching area in order.

#### **C. Classroom Instruction:**

1. Begins and ends lesson on time.
2. Keeps the attention of all students.
3. Presents material clearly, with enthusiasm and in an interesting manner.
4. Reviews previous lessons.
5. Relates new material to previous learning.
6. Uses a variety of methods to present material.
7. Uses audio-visual resources to reinforce, enrich or review material.
8. Summarizes lesson at the end of class presentation.
9. Makes appropriate assignments being aware of students' family structure.
10. Evaluates each class session.

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

1. Cooperates with the catechetical leader.
2. Attends all in-services for catechists at the parish level.
3. Attends diocesan in-services for catechists.
4. Informs parents of children's progress.
5. Keeps parents informed of discipline, special learning difficulties, or special needs observed about their children.
6. Is sensitive to the various family structures.
7. Works with other parish organizations sharing the same space.
8. Follows the directives of the pastor and/or catechetical leader in planning liturgies and sacramental programs.

## **INSERVICE/INITIAL FORMATION OF CATECHISTS**

### **The National Directory for Catechesis states:**

Initial formation of catechists most profitably precedes the beginning of their ministry and can employ different methodologies. Whether the training is done at a diocesan catechetical center or in the parish, it should be adapted as much as possible to the specific needs of the individual catechist. Because the catechist has been invited by the pastor to begin initial formation, it is assumed that the individual is personally known to the pastor and the pastoral staff, especially the parish catechetical leader. Under no circumstances should the initial formation of new catechists “be improvised or left to the initiative of the candidates themselves.” (NDC # 55D)

For information on the initial and ongoing formation of catechists, see the *National Directory for Catechesis*, no. 55: D-E.

Men and women from all walks of life volunteer for parish catechetical programs. Parish and diocesan programs for the preparation and ongoing in-service training of volunteers should include the following elements:

1. Provide basic orientation which includes instruction in theology, scripture, psychology and catechetical techniques.
2. Discuss how to identify goals and achieve them in their particular circumstances.
3. Provide opportunities for liturgical celebrations, prayer, retreats and other community experiences with other engaged in this ministry.
4. Continue in-service educational opportunities.
5. Offer regular assistance, from more experienced persons, in planning and evaluating their performance.
6. Provide opportunities to evaluate not only their performance but the program in which they are involved.
7. Offer more specialized training for those who will work physically or mentally with handicapped persons.
8. Cultivate a sense of community among the catechists during the entire formation process.
9. Have a parish commissioning ceremony, preferably on Catechetical Sunday, at the beginning of the year which expresses the faith community’s call and the catechists’ dedicated response.
10. Have a parish ceremony at the end of the year to acknowledge the contribution of the catechists to the catechetical ministry and express gratitude for the service they have rendered.

In-services for catechists are necessary for achieving the above. It will help strengthen religious education programs. Therefore, in-services should be scheduled periodically during the year. In addition, the Director of Religious Education should inform catechists of the offerings available from the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation.

### **Obligation Concerning the Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People**

It is mandated that all catechists in the Diocese of Lafayette undergo initial training and continuing education each year in the Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People. For more information call the Diocesan Office of Human Resources/Safe Environment 337-735-9434.

## LESSON PLANNING

In order to successfully cover the curriculum, maintain order, and keep the attention of the students, catechists must be committed to planning the lessons in advance of the scheduled classes.

Each textbook series follows a specific scope and sequence. It is important that teachers prepare well so that the entire curriculum is covered over the grade levels targeted by the series.

The “**scope**” of a series refers to the total amount of information (doctrine, scripture, tradition, prayer, etc.) that is taught in the entire series. The “**sequence**” of a series refers to when (grade level) each module of information is taught. The series, as a whole, follows a specific scope and sequence thus ensuring that the deposit of faith is addressed. Textbooks at each grade level are designed to address specific areas of the deposit of faith.

In order for the deposit of faith to be presented appropriately to students, catechists should be familiar with and prepared, in advance, to teach each lesson.

See the appendix for sample forms for planning lessons.

**Office of Christian Formation**  
**Diocese of Lafayette**  
**Catechist Certification Process with Echoes 3.0**  
**Revised 2015**

Levels I, II, III = Basic Catechist  
Level IV: Catechist  
Level V: Advanced Catechist  
Level VI: DRE or Religion Administrator

**List of Certification Workshops**

1. **Echoes of Faith Modules** will no longer be offered as workshops. The alternatives are:

a. Echoes 3.0 (online version)

b. **Echoes Modules:**

**Level I:**

- Getting Started as a Catechist
- Introduction to Sacred Scripture
- I Believe, We Believe
- Catholic Morality

**Level II:**

- Roles of the Catechist
- Person of the Catechist
- Methods for specific ages/grades
- Liturgy and Sacraments

**Level III:** Completion of **all** requirements in **Levels I, II, and III = Basic Catechist** certification

- Prayer and Spirituality
- Introduction to the Learner
- Ecclesiology online (not available yet) or Catholic Church workshop
- Multicultural Catechesis online (not available yet) or 2 electives

2. **Other Requirements**

a. **Safe Environment**

i. **Level I:** Initial Training

ii. **Levels II, III, IV, V, VI:** Continuing Ed

b. **Level I: Certification Process Workshop**

c. **Retreats and Days of Reflection/Prayer** (all are repeatable – different content and presenters every year)

i. **Level II:** Catechist Retreat – must be sponsored by Office of Christian Formation

ii. **Levels III, IV, V, VI:** Day of Reflection/Prayer

**d. Required Content Workshops**

**i. Levels IV, V:**

1. New Testament Studies
2. Catholic Social Teachings
3. Church History

**ii. Level VI:**

1. Conflict Resolution (school and parish)
2. Spirituality of the Catechetical Leader (school and parish)
3. Preparing Liturgies for Children (school)
4. DRE Orientation and Training (parish)

**e. Required Electives – as offered by OCF**

**i. Levels IV, V: total of 5 electives**

**Note:** Workshops **previously** used as a parish class/workshop in Levels III and IV may now be used as an elective. Applies only to workshops attended before 2015.

**ii. Level VI:**

1. School Religion Administrator – 5 electives
2. Parish DRE – 3 electives

**f. Required Specialized Methods**

**i. Levels IV, V: total of 9 Specialized Methods**

**g. Meeting Requirements**

**i. Level VI: Attendance at specified numbers of DRE or Religion Administrator meetings**

**Other Educational Opportunities**

**VLCFF**

University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF), Institute for Pastoral Initiatives. The Diocese of Lafayette has partnered with VLCFF to offer online courses for reduced fees. For more information: [www.vlc.udayton.edu](http://www.vlc.udayton.edu) 1-888-300-8436

**Loyola University New Orleans**

Loyola Institute for Ministry offers graduate degrees in Religious Education and Pastoral Studies. Online: [www.lim.loyno.edu](http://www.lim.loyno.edu) Extension Program (local): Office of Christian Formation, Diocese of Lafayette – 337-261-5550, [www.lim.loyno.edu](http://www.lim.loyno.edu) 1-800-777-5469

## **V Specific Program Areas**

### **Catechesis of Infants and Children**

For information on infants and children catechetical programs see: National Catechetical Directory #48 E (pp. 202-206)

### **Adolescent Catechesis**

For information on establishing an adolescent catechetical program see:

1. National Catechetical Directory #48 D (pp. 199-202)
2. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops document entitled: Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age, [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org), Christian Formation. This document was written for publishers in order to guide them in the writing of catholic high school catechetical programs. The USCCB has approved an adaptation of the curriculum for parish catechetical programs. There is an adaptation of this document for use in parish and youth ministry programs.

### **Adult Catechesis**

For information on establishing an adult catechetical program see:

National Catechetical Directory #48 A, B, & C

- A. Adult Catechesis (p. 187-199)
  1. Goals of Adult Catechesis
  2. Tasks of Adult Catechesis
  3. Content of Adult Catechesis
  4. Catechetical Methodology for Adults
- B. Catechesis of the Elderly
- C. Catechesis of Young Adults

### **Catechesis for Persons with Disabilities and Special Situations**

For information on recommendations for establishing a catechetical program for persons with disabilities see: National Catechetical Directory #49 (pp. 206-210)

### **Sacramental Program Catechesis**

For the Diocese of Lafayette policies for preparation of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation go to [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org), Christian Formation.

### **Lifelong Faith Formation (Whole Community Catechesis)**

For information on planning and implementing a whole parish catechetical program contact the Office of Christian Formation at 337-261-5550 or go to [www.pastoralplanning.com](http://www.pastoralplanning.com) or [www.cmdnet.org](http://www.cmdnet.org) or [www.generationsofffaith.org](http://www.generationsofffaith.org) or [www.LifeLongFaith.com](http://www.LifeLongFaith.com)

### **Summer Religious Education Programs**

For information on planning and implementing a summer religious education program, contact the Office of Christian Formation at 337-261-5550.

### **Vacation Bible School**

Several publishers create new and exciting VBS programs each year. Samples of these programs are displayed in the Office of Christian Formation sample textbook area. Parish DRE's are invited to evaluate these programs at their convenience.

## VI Office of Christian Formation Libraries

### Diocesan Resource Center

The Office of Christian Formation has a large collection of books in the Resource Center. OCF also maintains a reference library. The library contains information that might be helpful to students and those doing research on topics dealing with the Catholic Church.

#### Catechetical Documents

CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CT	On Catechesis in Our Time ( <i>Catechesi Tradendae</i> )
GDC	General Directory for Catechesis
GIRM	General Instructions of the Roman Missal
NDC	National Directory for Catechesis
OHWB	Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
RV	Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry
VS	The Splendor of Truth ( <i>Veritatis Splendor</i> )

#### Textbook Publishers

Please refer to the Office of Christian Formation website [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org) Christian Formation for a current listing of catechetical textbook publishers.

## VII Appendix

### Self Evaluation Instrument for Catechists

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Specific Responsibilities

	<b>weak</b>	<b>strong</b>			
<b>A. Class Planning:</b>					
1. I cooperate with the PCL/DRE in implementing the goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I appropriately use textbooks and manuals.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I observe procedures for use of resource material.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I pre-plan with the PCL/DRE for the use of diocesan resources.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I make written requests to the PCL/DRE for classroom supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I prepare weekly lesson plans.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>B. Classroom Management:</b>					
1. I am punctual for each class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I notify the PCL/DRE when I will be absent or tardy.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I keep an attractive and orderly teaching area.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I greet students as they enter the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I establish routine procedures for the instructional process.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I set simple, clear, minimum rules of discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I follow through and I am consistent on rules of discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am firm and kind with students.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I leave the teaching area in order.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>C. Instructional Procedures:</b>					
1. I begin and end each lesson on time.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have the attention of all students.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I present new material clearly, and in an interesting manner.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I review previous lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I relate new material to previous learning.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I use a variety of methods to present material.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I use audio-visuals to reinforce, enrich or review material.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I summarize each lesson at the end of class.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I make appropriate assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I evaluate each class session.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I show enthusiasm and interest in teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>D. Relationships:</b>					
1. I cooperate with the PCL/DRE.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I attend catechists' in-services at the parish level.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I attend diocesan in-services for catechists.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I inform parents of their child's progress.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I keep parents informed of discipline, special learning difficulties, or special needs observed about their children.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am sensitive to the various family structures.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I follow the directives of the pastor and/or PCL/DRE in planning liturgies and sacramental programs.	1	2	3	4	5

\_\_\_\_\_  
Catechist's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Instrument for the Evaluation of a Catechist

Catechist's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

### QUALITIES

1. Practices the Catholic faith.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ministers to the parish.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Supports the teachings of the Catholic Church.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Shows a concern for personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Maintains positive relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Has diocesan certification or is working toward it.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Relates well to young people in assigned age level.	1	2	3	4	5

### Specific Responsibilities:

#### A. Class Planning:

1. Cooperates with the PCL/DRE in implementing goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Uses textbooks and manuals appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Observes parish guidelines for use of resources.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Pre-plans with the PCL/DRE for the use of diocesan resources.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Makes written requests to the PCL/DRE for classroom supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Prepares weekly lesson plans.	1	2	3	4	5

#### B. Classroom Management:

1. Is punctual for class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Notifies the PCL/DRE when she/he will be absent or tardy.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Keeps an attractive, orderly teaching area.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Greets students as they enter the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Establishes routine procedures for the instructional process.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Sets simple, clear, minimum rules of discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Follows through and is consistent in rules of discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Is firm and kind with students.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Leaves the teaching area in order.	1	2	3	4	5

#### C. Instructional Procedures:

1. Begins and ends each lesson on time.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Has the attention of all the students.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Presents new material clearly and interestingly.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Reviews previous lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Relates new material to previous learning.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Uses a variety of methods.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Uses audio-visual resources.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Summarizes each lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Gives appropriate assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Evaluates each class session.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Shows enthusiasm and interest in teaching.	1	2	3	4	5

D. Relationships:

1. Cooperates with the PCL/DRE.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Attends catechists' in-service at the parish level.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Attends catechists' in-service at the diocesan level.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Informs parents of their child's progress.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Contacts parents when special needs arise.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Works with other organizations for total parish effectiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Exhibits an awareness of different family structures.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Follows the directives of the pastor and/or PCL/DRE in planning liturgies and other sacramental programs.	1	2	3	4	5

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Director of Religious Education

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\* Catechist

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Date

\* Signature of the Catechist does not mean he/she agrees with the evaluation, only that she/he has read the evaluation.

**Covenant for Catechists**

As the Lord called the apostles to spread the Good News,  
So you are called to speak God's truth in love.

God has empowered and commissioned you  
through Baptism  
to proclaim the Good News  
with conviction, joy, love, enthusiasm and hope.

You are called by me, the pastor of \_\_\_\_\_  
To serve as a catechist for the \_\_\_\_\_ year.

As Pastor,

And in the name of the faithful of \_\_\_\_\_ Parish,  
I welcome your response to this call to serve God's people.  
Together, we offer you our prayers,  
Our support and our cooperation.  
We ask Jesus Christ, the Word of God,  
To deepen your faith in Him and in the Church  
Through your experience this year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

I ACCEPT THE CALL TO GIVE CHRISTIAN WITNESS BY MY LIFE  
AND THROUGH MY TEACHINGS.  
I AGREE TO PREPARE WELL FOR MY CLASSES,  
PRAY FOR AND WITH MY STUDENTS,  
ATTEND IN-SERVICES FOR CERTIFICATION  
AND COOPERATE WITH MY PARISH AND  
DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS.

I PRAY THAT THE LORD, JESUS CHRIST, WILL FILL ME WITH HIS TRUTH  
AND EMPOWER ME TO PROCLAIM HIS MESSAGE  
TO THE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Catechist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Self Evaluation Instrument for a PCL, DRE** (This instrument may be modified for evaluation of coordinators of specific catechetical programs.)

**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

		<b>weak</b>			<b>strong</b>
1. I am aware of catechetical needs of the parish.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I study catechetical needs with a family perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I design programs according to diocesan guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I follow diocesan policy in developing goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I follow parish policy in developing goals and objectives for each catechetical program.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I schedule liturgical events involving catechists, students and parents.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I design sacramental preparation programs involving students and parents.	1	2	3	4	5

**ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Management**

1. I keep an organized Office of Religious Education.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I implement diocesan policies and guidelines	1	2	3	4	5
3. I implement parish policies and guidelines	1	2	3	4	5
4. I prepare a budget for catechetical programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I administer the budget conscientiously.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I keep updated files on administrative details	1	2	3	4	5
7. I keep updated files on each catechist	1	2	3	4	5
8. I keep updated files on each student	1	2	3	4	5
9. I safeguard confidential files and use them discretely.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I organize and maintain a resource center.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I cooperate with other parish organizations in total parish ministry.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am prompt in returning reports and surveys to the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation.	1	2	3	4	5

**B. Leadership**

1. I recruit qualified catechists.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I support the members of the catechetical staff in their ministry.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I provide training opportunities for new staff members.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I provide in-service at the parish level for the catechetical staff.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I coordinate the certification process for catechists according to diocesan directives.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I participate in diocesan catechetical events.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I involve parents in catechetical programs.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I schedule liturgical events involving catechists, students, and parents.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I assist catechists in preparing liturgies.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I take time for professional reading and personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5

**C. Supervision**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I oversee and guide all secretarial work for religious education.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I assist catechists in their assigned responsibilities.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I oversee the instructional process including classroom supervision. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**EVALUATION**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I prepare my self evaluation for the formal evaluation.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I evaluate catechists annually.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I conduct annual evaluations of catechetical programs to determine if goals and objectives are being met. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**COMMUNICATION**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I communicate with the pastor regarding catechetical programs.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I communicate with the staff regarding catechetical programs.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I hold regularly scheduled staff meetings.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I use various means to inform parents of children's progress (e.g., bulletin, notices, letters, telephone calls and/or conferences). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I make use of the resources available from the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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Director of Religious Education

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Date

**Instrument for Evaluation of a PCL or DRE** (This instrument may be modified for evaluation of coordinators of specific catechetical programs.)

<b>QUALITIES</b>	<b>weak</b>			<b>strong</b>	
1. Practices the Catholic faith.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knows and supports the teachings of the Catholic Church	1	2	3	4	5
3. Shows concern for ongoing personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Maintains positive relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Affirms others through leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Empowers others to use their talents.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Holds appropriate diocesan certification as a PCL/DRE or is otherwise qualified according to diocesan recommendations.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Earns hours yearly toward diocesan updating and certification.	1	2	3	4	5

**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

1. Is aware of the catechetical needs of the parish.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Views catechetical needs with a family perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Uses diocesan guidelines in designing programs.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Follows diocesan policy in developing goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Follows parish policy in developing goals and objectives for each catechetical program.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Designs sacramental preparation programs involving students and parents.	1	2	3	4	5

**ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Management**

1. Organizes and maintains the Parish Office of Religious Education.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Implements diocesan policies.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Implements approved parish policies.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Prepares a budget for catechetical programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administers the approved budget.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Keeps files updated.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Maintains a resource center.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Cooperates with other parish organizations.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Sends annual reports to the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation.	1	2	3	4	5

**B. Leadership**

1. Recruits catechists and other staff persons.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Supports catechists.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Provides in-service for catechetical staff.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Coordinates the certification process at parish level according to diocesan directives.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Participates in diocesan catechetical events.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Involves parents in catechetical programs.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Schedules liturgical events involving catechists, students, and parents.	1	2	3	4	5

**C. Supervision**

1. Facilitates the instructional process including the supervision of catechists in their teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Assists catechists in carrying out assigned responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Oversees the work of the secretary for the school of religion.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Oversees the instructional process including classroom supervision.	1	2	3	4	5

**COMMUNICATION**

1. Communicates information about catechetical programs to the pastor and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Holds regular staff meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Keeps parents informed about children's progress.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Uses diocesan resources.	1	2	3	4	5

**EVALUATIONS**

1. Prepares self evaluation instruments for the formal evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Evaluates the catechists annually using the diocesan instrument.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Conducts with catechists an evaluation of programs to determine if catechetical goals and objectives are being met.	1	2	3	4	5

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Pastor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**\*PCL or DRE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\*Signature of the catechetical leader does not mean he/she agrees with the evaluation, only that he/she has seen the results of the evaluation.

## EVALUATING THE PROGRAM

### Evaluation of a Parish School of Religion by Parish Leadership

Enrollment	Number who attended Regularly	*Number who do not attend regularly	*Number who never attend (estimate)
Pre-School			
Kindergarten			
First Grade			
Second Grade			
Third Grade			
Fourth Grade			
Fifth Grade			
Sixth Grade			
Seventh Grade			
Eight Grade			
Ninth Grade			
Tenth Grade			
Eleventh Grade			
Twelfth Grade			

\*This information can be gathered from accurately kept attendance records and parish census.

### Evaluation of Overall Program

1. The Parish School of Religion has a written statement of goals and objectives. Yes  No
2. The Parish School of Religion curriculum corresponds with diocesan policy. Yes  No
3. The resource center has media materials corresponding to the developmental level of the learners. Yes  No
4. The Parish School of Religion has adequate funding. Yes  No
5. The Parish School of Religion has an ongoing evaluation process which identifies strengths and weaknesses. Yes  No
6. The Parish School of Religion provides adequate teaching space for each group of learners. Yes  No

### Personnel

1. The PCL/DRE is working toward meeting the educational requirements of this position. Yes  No
2. The PCL/DRE continues to grow professionally by attending diocesan in-services. Yes  No   
Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Number of catechists currently teaching in program. \_\_\_\_\_

4. List the number of catechists in relation to certification:

Level I: Certificate of Completion \_\_\_\_ Level VI: Administrator Certification (CRA or DRE) \_\_\_\_\_

Level II: Certificate of Completion \_\_\_\_ Level VII: Institutes & Specialized Trainings \_\_\_\_\_

Level III: Basic Catechist Certification \_\_\_\_ Level VIII: Continuing Ed. Certificate \_\_\_\_\_

Level IV: Catechist Certification \_\_\_\_ Level IX: Undergraduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Level V: Advanced Catechist Certification \_\_\_\_\_ Level X: Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_

***Note: Levels VI – X are accomplished by attending classes offered by Institutes, Colleges or Universities. These Levels are recognized by the Office of Christian Formation as beyond the scope of the certification process. No certificates are awarded by OCF for completion of these levels. However, the certificates and degrees recognized in these levels must be in Theology, Religious Education or a related field.***

5. Catechists are provided with a variety of growth opportunities toward certification.

Yes \_\_ No

### **Points of Focus in Religious Education Programs**

1. A family perspective is evident in all aspects of the Religious Education Program.

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

2. Program helps young people, according to age and ability, to be of service to the community.

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

3. Young people are involved, according to age and ability, in planning liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

4. Young people have occasions for retreats which develop a community of faith.

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

5. The entire learning environment encourages learners to respect and value:

a. Peace and justice in local and world community. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

b. The human dignity of each person regardless of age, race, sex, religion and economics.

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

6. Cultural values are integrated within the Parish School of Religion. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

### **Relationships**

1. There is a positive working relationship between the pastor and PCL/DRE. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

2. There is a positive working relationship between the PCL/DRE and other parish staff. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

3. There is a spirit of cooperation in planning and scheduling the use of parish facilities. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

4. There is a positive working relationship between the PCL/DRE and the Catholic school staff. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

5. The PCL/DRE and the catechists meet regularly. Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

# Samples:

## Parish School of Religion (PSR) Calendar (sample) Weekdays

(Name of Parish)

Parish School of Religion (PSR) Calendar 20\_\_ - \_\_\_\_  
Grades K – 12

### Wednesdays

August	23	*Orientation/In-service	January	3	Class
	30	Class		10	Class
September	6	Class		24	Class
	13	Class		31	Class
	20	Class	February	7	*In-service
	27	*In-service		14	Class
October	4	Class		21	Class
	11	Class		28	Class
	18	Class	March	7	Class
November	1	Liturgy – All Saints		14	*In-service
	8	*In-service		21	Class
	15	Class		28	Class
	22	*Thanksgiving	April	4	Class
	29	Class		11	Class (Holy Week)
December	6	Class		18	Class
	13	Class		25	Class
	20	Class	May	2	Class
	27	*Christmas holiday		9	Class
				16	Class

Total number of classes 27

Total number of In-services 5 (Includes diocesan in-services)

Total number of Liturgies 1

\* No Class

**Parish School of Religion (PSR) Calendar (sample)**  
**(Name of Parish)**

**Parish School of Religion (PSR) Calendar 20\_\_ - 20\_\_**  
**Grades K-12**

**Sundays**

August		No Class, Catechists' Orientation (date __)
September	10	Class begins
	17	Class
	24	Class (Catechetical Sunday)
October	1	Class
	8	No Class- Catechists' In-service
	15	Class
	22	Class
	29	Class (All Saints Liturgy – grades 3 & 4)
November	5	Class – Open House for parents & parishioners
	12	Class
	19	No Class, Catechists' In-service
	26	No Class, Thanksgiving Vacation
December	3	Class (Advent Liturgy – grades 5 & 6)
	10	Class
	17	Class
	24	No Class, Christmas Vacation
	31	No Class, Christmas Vacation
January	7	Class
	14	Class
	21	Class
	28	Class
February	4	Class
	11	Class
	18	Class
	25	Class (Lenten Liturgy - high school)
March	4	Class
	11	Class
	18	No Class – Catechists' In-service
	25	Class
April	1	Class (Liturgy – grades 7 & 8)
	8	Class
	15	No Class – Easter Vacation
	22	Class
	29	Class
May	6	Class (Liturgy grades 1 & 2)
	13	Class

Total Class Sessions 28  
 Total number of In-services 4  
 Total number of Liturgies per class 1

## Sample Lesson Plan

**Personalized Lesson Plan Lesson # \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Book, pages \_\_\_\_\_ Manual, pages \_\_\_\_\_**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Aim

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Review

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Resources materials needed

Approx. Time

I. Prayer and Introduction (Life Experience)

A.

B.

\_\_\_\_\_ min.

C.

II. Christian Dimension (Content, Scripture, Tradition)

A.

B.

\_\_\_\_\_ min.

C.

III. Faith Response (Challenge)

A.

B.

\_\_\_\_\_ min.

C.

After Class notes

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This format can be adjusted to fit the textbook being used by the parish.

**Student Permanent Record**  
Sample

Student's name (Last, middle, first) \_\_\_\_\_  
(as recorded on Baptismal certificate)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(as recorded on Baptismal certificate)

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Wk Ph # \_\_\_\_\_ Hm Ph # \_\_\_\_\_  
(as recorded on Baptismal certificate)

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Wk Ph # \_\_\_\_\_ Hm Ph # \_\_\_\_\_  
(as recorded on Baptismal certificate)

Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Wk Ph # \_\_\_\_\_ Hm Ph # \_\_\_\_\_

School currently attending \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_ - 20\_\_

Date of Baptism \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Church of Baptism \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of Baptismal Certificate on file Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

First Reconciliation \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

First Eucharist \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

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**Student Permanent Record  
(continued)  
Sample**

**Class List and Attendance Record**

Grade Level	Year	*Times Present	Name of Catechist	Textbook Series Used	Parish Attended
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

\*Times present in relation to number of classes held (e.g., 5/29)

Special information pertinent to this student

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Record was transferred to: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Catechist Information Forms  
(Sample)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Office \_\_\_\_\_

Children's names and grades \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

Birthday Date (month, day, year) \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Education Information: On Class Preference

Area You Prefer to Work In \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) you chose this area \_\_\_\_\_

Time you'd like your class to meet \_\_\_\_\_

Person you would prefer to work with \_\_\_\_\_

In-service and background \_\_\_\_\_

Former Teaching Experience in Religious Education:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Former Religious Education Training (in-services, workshops, conferences, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For our planning purposes and scheduling:

Time most convenient for you to attend workshops and meetings:

Evenings: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Night: M T W TH F Saturday morning: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personnel Record for Parish Catechists  
SAMPLE**

**Office of Religious Education**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parish \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status (check one)    Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
    Sister \_\_\_\_\_ Brother \_\_\_\_\_ Priest \_\_\_\_\_ Deacon \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Office \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to contact you \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Background:**

High School Diploma    Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor's Degree: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Name Degree \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Master's Degree: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Name Degree \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Certified Catechist for Diocese of Lafayette: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Year certified \_\_\_\_\_

Advanced Catechist Certification for Diocese of Lafayette: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Year certified \_\_\_\_\_

Other Certifications (in fields related to religious education only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN RELIGION**

Grade and/or Course	Year	Parish or School, City & State



## **Parish Data Systems**

Parish Data Systems has excellent online tutorials for catechetical leaders to learn how to use the formation component of PDS. Go to [www.parishdata.com](http://www.parishdata.com). Your parish secretary should have the access code.

## **Guidelines for Parish Sponsored, Home Based Catechesis**

- Home-based catechists are to have been background checked and completed all required forms just as catechists in a parish-based program.
- Two unrelated adults should be present at all times for the classes.
- The catechetical leader must perform random site visits to each home-based program.
- Drapes should be open in the house while sessions are being held.
- Learning spaces should be well lit.
- Students should remain in designated learning areas of the house.
- At no time should students be allowed in bedrooms or other secluded areas of the house.
- To the extent possible, individual students, other than the catechist's own children, should not be in the catechist's home alone.