

# DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE - SOUTH BEND

OFFICE OF CATECHESIS

January 12, 2010

Dear Catechist,

Our Bishop, as chief Shepherd and Teacher, has entrusted to the Office of Catechesis his vision of how our children are to be formed in the Catholic faith. Thus, you have a profound task to teach and witness to our children the message of God's absolute love for each of them. They are privileged to have this time to grow in their faith and recognize that their life on earth is a journey to eternity, life forever with God in heaven.

These Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines are based upon the directives of the 2005 *National Directory for Catechesis*. They have been specially designed for two purposes;

1. They indicate to you the truths to be taught at each grade level.
2. Recognizing that, "it is true that catechists catechize others by firstly catechizing themselves,"<sup>1</sup> the Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines have also been designed to help you in your ongoing Christ-centered faith formation and spirituality. If you are unclear about a concept, each doctrinal statement is aligned with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and/or the *Compendium to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Scripture references are included to be read in class when appropriate, allowing your students to appreciate the significance of Scripture in the Catholic Tradition.

The texts recommended for use follow the 'scope and sequence' method. This means there is a specific goal for each year, building upon the previous years. At the same time, within this design there is a 'spiral' method. This is a repetition of major doctrines repeated each year. An example would be the Sacraments of Reconciliation and

the Eucharist. Educators affirm that learning takes place when there is repetition, anywhere from 8 – 16 times. Each year the repeated material progresses in a depth that is appropriate to the age of the child. The material is presented in a way that reflects the way Christ formed his disciples, through the six tasks of catechesis.

These curriculum guidelines precede the text book. That means the text is a tool to assist conveying the content that the child has a right to be taught each year.

Because the aim of Catechesis, according to Pope Paul II is “to bring each person into union and intimacy with Christ”<sup>2</sup> there must be the engagement of the mind and heart. Practical and interactive life application and prayer assist in this process of engaging and forming the whole person.

The six tasks of catechesis do not exist in isolation. They flow from the way Christ formed his disciples. Thus, they become unified in Christ’s wisdom of teaching his disciples. “Jesus instructed his disciples; he prayed with them; he showed them how to live; and he gave them his mission.”<sup>3</sup>

As a teacher of the faith, may you grow in your Catholic faith and find joy and fulfillment in handing on the revelation of God’s love through the person of Jesus Christ and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. May the Most Holy Trinity be blessed now and forever.

The Staff of the Office of Catechesis

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<sup>1</sup> *General Directory for Catechesis* #239

<sup>2</sup> *Catechesi Tradendae* #5

<sup>3</sup> *The National Directory of Catechesis* #20