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DEFINITIONS AND CONVENTIONS

In this handbook, Policies are mandatory rules of conduct which establish minimum standards to be observed in all parishes. **Policies are printed in boldface type.**

Guidelines are intended to be aspirational and instructive, and are printed in regular Times Roman 12 pitch font.

LEADERSHIP ROLES IN CATECHESIS

RATIONALE

"All members of a community of believers are called to share in (the ministry of catechesis) by being witnesses to the faith. Some, however, are called to more specific roles. Parents, teachers, and principals in Catholic schools, parish catechists, coordinators or directors of religious education, those who work in diocesan and national catechetical offices, deacons, priests and bishops - all are catechists with distinct roles." National Catechetical Directory, #204

A clear, common understanding of the various roles will contribute to the orderly and effective accomplishment of the church's catechetical mission.

PARENTS

Since parents have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. Catechetical programs assist parents in the Christian formation and the sacramental preparation of their children.

In these Policies and Guidelines, the term parent refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a child's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

THE BISHOP

The Bishop, by his very position, is the authentic teacher in this diocese. The Bishop has the ultimate authority and responsibility in all matters of catechesis. By his word and example he prophetically calls the People of God to a life of holiness in the Lord.

THE PASTOR

Within the scope of authority specifically entrusted to him by the Bishop of the Diocese and Canon Law, the pastor is the shepherd of the parish entrusted to him. Under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop, he exercises pastoral care for the total catechetical program of the parish. He accomplishes this responsibility personally and through his staff: associate pastor, directors of religious education, coordinators of religious education, principal and others.

The pastor of a parish is responsible for the implementation of all Policies and Guidelines approved by the Office of Catechetics. The pastor also provides spiritual and financial support to catechetical programs.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DRE)

As administrator of all parish catechetical programs, the director of religious education, under the direction of the pastor, has the major responsibility for the comprehensive coordination of the program according to Diocesan Policies and Guidelines. As a catechetical leader, the director of religious education creates an atmosphere conducive to the proclamation of the Good News and prayerful worship, faithful service and formation in Catholic doctrine.

CATECHIST

"The catechist responds to a ministerial call, which comes from the Lord and is articulated in the local Church by the Bishop. The response to this call includes willingness to give time and talent, not only to catechizing others, but to one's own continued growth in faith and understanding." National Catechetical Directory, #206

"The fundamental tasks of catechists are to proclaim Christ's message, to participate in efforts to develop community, to lead people to worship and prayer, and to motivate them to serve others." National Catechetical Directory, #213

Catechists are involved in preparing families for the baptism of infants, catechesis of adults preparing for initiation into the church, adult study groups, as well as the catechesis of children, adolescents and those with special needs.

OFFICE OF CATECHETICS

The Office of Catechetics is directly responsible to the Bishop for the successful administration of all catechesis within the Diocese. The Office of Catechetics is responsible, in cooperation with the parish pastor and director of religious education, for the implementation of all policies and guidelines approved for catechetical programs in the diocese.

The Office of Catechetics encourages directors of religious education/coordinators of religious education to select catechists who are witnesses of the Catholic faith. It develops administrative procedures and offers services for diocesan religious education programs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE

The religious education committee has been established by the Bishop to be advisory to him on all matters pertaining to religious education in the diocese. The committee is to work with the Director, Office of Catechetics and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in formulating programs and policies and other support for religious education in the diocese. The committee's special areas of concern are adult education and parish programs of catechesis for children and youth. The committee identifies and maintains awareness of the catechetical situation in the diocese. It assures that there are practical catechetical goals and recommends a diocesan program of action for the achievement of these goals.

In its work, the committee shall seek to apply the principles enunciated in the General Catechetical Directory, the National Catechetical Directory, Catechesi Tradendae, the Pastoral Message To Teach as Jesus Did, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and other directives issued by ecclesiastical authority.

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The religious education committee of an individual parish, advises the director of religious education about issues related to religious education programs. The religious education committee is consultative to both the pastor and the director of religious education and advises the administration in areas of long-range planning, finances, policy development and public relations.

CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS:
ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES

RATIONALE

"Catechesis refers to efforts which help individuals and communities acquire and deepen Christian faith and identity through initiation rites, instruction, and formation of conscience. It includes both the message presented and the way in which it is presented." National Catechetical Directory, #5

"There is a proper and serious duty, especially on the part of pastors of souls, to provide for the catechesis of the Christian people so that the faith of the faithful becomes living, explicit and productive through formation in doctrine and the experience of Christian living." Code of Canon Law, #773

"Catechetical instruction must be systematic, not improvised but programmed to reach a precise goal; -- it must deal with essentials, without any claim to tackle all disputed questions or to transform itself into theological research or scientific exegesis; -- it must nevertheless be sufficiently complete, not stopping short at the initial proclamation of the Christian mystery such as we have in the kerygma; -- it must be an integral Christian initiation, open to all other factors of Christian life." Catechesi Tradendae, Pope John Paul II, #19

ACCREDITATION

POLICY:

1. **All parish religious education programs seek, acquire, and maintain diocesan accreditation according to the standards set forth by the Diocese of Arlington's Office of Catechetics and as contained in these Guidelines.**

PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT

A Philosophy Statement is a set of examined beliefs which state the direction of the program. It is based on the Church documents related to catechesis.

The Mission Statement relates these beliefs to the local parish and its community. This statement focuses on why the program exists, whom it serves, and how it serves. It relates to the Mission Statement of the total parish.

POLICY:

1. **Each parish develops a Philosophy and Mission Statement for catechetical programs.**
2. **Both statements are reviewed regularly by those responsible for catechesis, (e.g. the pastor, director of religious education, parish religious education committee, catechists) and a plan to integrate and implement the statements is developed.**

COMPREHENSIVE CATECHESIS

POLICY:

1. Each parish provides a comprehensive program of catechesis for all parishioners: children, youth and adults, including persons with special needs.
2. The elements of message, community, service and worship are all integral parts of the total catechetical program. Liturgical celebrations of prayer, Eucharist and Penance are provided.
3. Parishes follow the diocesan guidelines for preparation for the sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) and Penance.
4. Programs of catechesis in human sexuality adhere to the principles described in the Diocese's publication, **A Vocation to Love**, and the USCC document, **Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning**.
5. Fostering a commitment to Social Justice and peace is part of the Church's **catechetical** mission.

GUIDELINES

1. The design of the program reflects the philosophy and mission statements and corresponds to the needs of parishioners: children, youth, adults and persons with special needs.

ADULT EDUCATION

POLICY:

1. **Since the education of adults is so important, it receives special attention in parish religious education programs.**

GUIDELINES:

1. "Catechesis for adults, since it deals with persons who are capable of an adherence that is fully responsible, must be considered the chief form of catechesis. All the other forms, which are indeed always necessary, are in some way oriented to it." General Catechetical Directory, #20
2. "To assign primacy to adult catechesis does not mean sacrificing catechesis at other age levels; it means making sure that what is done earlier is carried to its culmination in adulthood." National Catechetical Directory, #188
3. "Catechesis is a lifelong process for the individual and a constant and concerted pastoral activity in the Christian community." National Catechetical Directory, #32

GOALS OF ADULT CATECHESIS

GUIDELINES

1. Adult catechesis is directed at helping individuals and communities understand and live the Gospel to the fullest extent possible.
2. Adult catechesis aims at aiding adults to participate according to their abilities and opportunities in the mission of the Church, that is, in spreading God's Word, actively building community, serving people, and celebrating the sacred mysteries.
3. Adult catechesis seeks to prepare adults to test and interpret all things in a wholly Christian spirit. This involves enabling adults to focus the light of the Gospel on issues of our time and evaluate them correctly: cultural and sociological developments, new questions of a religious and moral nature, and the interplay between temporal responsibilities and the Church's mission to the world. (cf. National Catechetical Directory, #46)
4. Adult catechesis helps adults to share their faith through example and explanation. This includes giving an intellectually satisfying demonstration of the Gospel's relevance to life.

MOTIVATION FOR ADULT CATECHESIS

GUIDELINES

1. All personnel involved with adult catechesis, including clergy, directors of religious education, coordinators of religious education, education boards, etc. establish and maintain a total learning environment in the parish. This is a spirit and an atmosphere that influence participative liturgies, shared decision making, priorities in the parish budget, commitment to social justice, and a general encouragement for adults to become religiously mature persons.
2. Adult catechesis should be presented as a way of being Church. "(Adult education) is an ecclesiology that stresses the call for us to be seekers and doers of truth as hallmarks of our discipleship (of Jesus)." Serving Life and Faith, #141 (Department of Education, USCC)

FAMILY MINISTRY

GUIDELINES

All personnel involved with adult education are aware that the Family, the "domestic church," deserves special attention. Catechesis for children is more difficult when family life is weak or dysfunctional. Where feasible, programs of family ministry are developed. These programs may take various forms, including, but not limited to:

Lectionary based programs follow the liturgical readings of the year with consequent activities and applications to the Christian life;

Clusters of families gather for religious study, discussion, prayer and service activities;

Home study within the family, following a religious text and supplemented with periodic visits by catechetical personnel;

Personal visits by pastoral ministers for the purpose of encouraging and empowering families for a sound family life as well as active religious practice.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

The Diocesan Office of Catechetics earnestly encourages the formation of parish-based ministries for young adults. Often the need of young adults for Church sponsored young adult programs is great, yet can easily be overlooked by parish staffs who are concerned with many other activities.

GUIDELINES

1. Young adult ministries are developed and conducted in ways which emphasize self-direction, dialogue, and mutual responsibility. (cf. National Catechetical Directory, #227)
2. Since community is a prime need among young adults, this facet is emphasized, connecting it with the larger parish community and the value of service to others.

PROCESS FOR ADULT CATECHESIS

GUIDELINES

1. Adult religious education relates to and collaborates with other ministries, such as worship, the catechumenate, programs for those returning to active Church practice, and Christian service.
2. Catechesis for adults respects and builds on their life experiences. Rather than dictate to them, adult education leaders listen to the thoughts, feelings, needs, and circumstances of adult learners and allow them to influence the educational design.
3. Adult education prospers best when it is conducted within a community, preferably within a small group where people know and respect each other. Learning in faith for adults is not primarily a matter of information to be mastered but of relationships to be lived, particularly the relationship of the learner to God, who is all wisdom. (cf. Serving Life and Faith, #114)
4. Adult catechesis is life centered. God speaks to people in many ways; the most common is through human, life experiences. By shining the light of faith on these experiences adult education allows God's voice to come through loud and clear.
5. People are different in many ways: From their social and educational backgrounds, their cultural perspectives, even learning styles and religious histories. As much as possible, the adult educational design presents a variety of learning experiences and eclectic approaches.
6. Adult catechesis empowers learners to learn by themselves and become the best friend of God they can be.

CURRICULUM -- ELEMENTARY

POLICY:

1. The curriculum of the parish religious education programs follows and adheres to current diocesan policies and curriculum guidelines.
2. The elementary curriculum of each parish develops out of its comprehensive catechetical plan and reflects the philosophy and mission statements on which the entire **plan** is based.
(cf #202, 203 above)
3. For each grade of elementary religious education, the curriculum includes specific cognitive, affective (attitude), and lifestyle (behavior) goals according to the child's level of ability. The sequentially ordered goals, by the end of the elementary course, cover all basic religious tenets.

CURRICULUM -- SECONDARY

POLICY:

1. The secondary religious education curriculum follows and adheres to current diocesan policies and curriculum guidelines.
2. The secondary religious education curriculum reflects the influence of directive norms from such documents **as** Sharing the Light of Faith (National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States), Catechesi Tradendae (Pope John Paul 11), **as** well **as** the consensual wisdom and empirical data of such documents **as** the Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis, and Toward Effective Parish Religious Education for Children and Young People (NCEA Association, 1986).
3. The secondary curriculum includes material necessary or very helpful for the religious maturity of youth.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

POLICY:

1. The selection of materials for instruction is the result of a cooperative effort of the pastor, the director of religious education, the religious education committee, coordinators, catechists, and parents involved.

2. Evaluation of catechetical materials is on-going, following a pre-determined **time-line** for curricular overview.

3. Materials purchased correspond to the needs of the community served, as well as the resources of the parish religious education programs.

TEXTBOOKS

POLICY:

1. It is the responsibility of the director of religious education, the pastor and the religious education staff to ensure the use of textbooks which reflect a truly Christian and Catholic philosophy.

2. All religious textbooks have a current imprimatur and are from the list of texts recommended by the Office of Catechetics. In addition they present the message of Christ in a manner appropriate to the abilities of the child. Textbooks and teaching methods affirm the dignity of all people of all races, ages, gender, nationality and ethnic identities. A period of study and evaluation of at least one year precedes the adoption of a basic textbook series.

3. A multi-text approach may be used provided that a coherent scope and sequence of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and lifestyle to be developed is followed.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

GUIDELINES:

1. Every parish organizes and maintains, according to available resources, a parish library/media center for the use of catechetical personnel.
2. Books, audio-visual, and other catechetical materials are properly catalogued for efficient use.
3. The director of religious education recruits, according to local circumstances, a qualified person to oversee catechetical resources.
4. The director of religious education **and/or** a qualified person appointed by the director of religious education and approved by the pastor is part of the selection process for new catechetical materials.
5. Parishes also use resources from the diocesan audio-visual resource center.

TESTING PROGRAM

POLICY:

1. **Religion Surveys published by the NCEA are administered to children in grades 5, 8 and 11 annually.**

TIME ALLOTMENT FOR PARISH CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS

GUIDELINES:

1. The time allotment schedule demonstrates priorities based upon the particular catechetical approach of each parish. Formational needs, as determined by the director of religious education, in consultation with the pastor and the catechists or coordinators dictate priorities in setting up a schedule.
2. Parish religious education programs may determine their own time schedule providing they stay within the minimum and maximum times specified by the Office of Catechetics. (cf. Policy #504, #1)
3. Directors or coordinators assure that time allotment schedules are met for all parish catechetical programs, including retreats, Bible or Vacation School, and seasonal workshops.
4. Directors or coordinators, together with staff and/or pastors periodically evaluate the effectiveness of time distribution and examine possible revisions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM CALENDAR**POLICY:**

1. **The Diocesan Office of Catechetics determines a minimum of hours for parish catechetical programs.**

2. **Each director or coordinator of religious education submits an accurate calendar of parish catechetical programs and events to the Office of Catechetics no later than the First Sunday of Advent of each year.**

EMERGENCY DISMISSALS AND CANCELLATIONS**POLICY:**

- 1. At the beginning of the year parents are notified of the method the catechetical programs will use to announce unplanned non-attendance days. (cf 503 #2)**

PERSONNEL

RATIONALE

"On the parish and diocesan level, through its agencies and institutions, the church employs many people;...All the moral principles that govern the just operation of any economic endeavor apply to the church and its agencies and institutions, indeed the church should be exemplary." Economic Justice for All, #347 (NCCB, 1986)

Equity, the fair and equal treatment of all employees, is an essential aspect of just employment practices. The consistent application of personnel policies will contribute to equitable treatment of catechetical personnel.

SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

POLICY:

1. The Diocese of Arlington affirms and supports equality of opportunity and treatment for its present and prospective employees and complies with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to parishes, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, sex, condition of handicap or disability, marital status, or age, while reserving the right to give priority in employment to persons of the Catholic faith.
2. All catechetical employees and volunteer catechists are practicing Catholics.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

POLICY:

1. Each parish has the services of a qualified director of religious education to provide for the comprehensive catechetical program of the parish.
2. If a parish is too small to support a full-time director of religious education then it shares a director of religious education with another parish.
3. If, for whatever reason, a parish hires a coordinator of religious education to function as a director of religious education, the contract stipulates that the individual has five (5) years to obtain the necessary qualifications for the director of religious education position.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DRE)

POLICY:

A director of religious education has the necessary personal qualities, catechetical understanding and skills, organizational and administrative abilities, academic preparation and professional experience to direct the entire religious education program of the parish including providing catechist training, curriculum development and selection of curriculum resources, program design, planning and evaluation as well as supervision of staff, both paid and volunteer, for all age levels (pre-school through adult).

1. The qualifications for a director of religious education are:
 - a. To be a practicing Catholic.
 - b. To have a master's degree in religious education, theology or related field.
 - c. To have 3 years experience as parish catechist.
 - d. Willingness to continue professional development through workshops, institutes, diocesan meetings, etc.
 - e. To have a letter of agreement or contract and job description on file and approved by the Diocesan Office of Catechetics.
 - f. To be recognized by the Diocesan Office of Catechetics.

An equivalency for any or all of the above requirements, particularly those involving education and experience, may be determined by the Director, Office of Catechetics.

COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CRE)POLICY:

A coordinator of religious education has the necessary personal qualities, catechetical skills, organizational skills, training and experience as a catechist to perform the administrative responsibilities which are an essential element of a parish religious education program. A coordinator of religious education is ordinarily responsible for recruiting catechists, arranging for catechist training, scheduling classes and programs, ordering materials, communicating with parents.

1. The qualifications for a coordinator of religious education are:
 - a. To be a practicing Catholic.
 - b. To have 3 years experience as parish catechist.
 - c. To have an advanced certification as catechist.
 - d. Willingness to work toward a master's degree.
 - e. To have a contract or letter of agreement and job description on file and approved by the diocesan **office**.
 - f. To be recognized by the Diocesan Director of the Office of Catechetics prior to hiring.

An equivalency for any or all of the above requirements, particularly those involving education and experience, may be determined by the Director, Office of Catechetics.

SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

POLICY:

1. The pastor and the Religious Education Committee, working in consultation with the Director, Office of Catechetics, are responsible for the recruitment, interviewing, selection and employment of the director of religious education/coordinator of religious education. Prior to a contract being signed, the person is approved by the Director, **Office** of Catechetics.
2. Employers must have on file for each employee hired since November 6, 1986 a completed form **I-9**, Employment Eligibility Verification.
3. In addition to the foregoing, all catechetical personnel are required to comply with all applicable provisions of the diocese's policy on Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse.

GUIDELINES:

1. The use of a search committee in selecting a new director of religious education/coordinator of religious education is highly recommended.
2. Members of the search committee are appointed by the pastor or hiring agent.
 - a. Members include a broad cross-section of the people involved in the parish.
 - b. The search committee is large enough to be representative and small enough to be workable.
3. The task of the search committee is to seek out and screen the best qualified and most acceptable candidates for the position. The search committee interviews and checks the references of those candidates who meet the position's criteria. The search committee then forwards its recommendations to the pastor or hiring agent. The pastor or hiring agent employs candidates approved by the Office of Catechetics.

EMPLOYEE CONTRACT

POLICY:

1. All lay persons employed in a professional catechetical capacity within a parish are employed by contract.
2. Religious personnel may or may not sign individual contracts according to the religious community's agreement with the diocese.
3. All non-diocesan priests on individual contract in a parish must have prior approval of the bishop.
4. Contracts have a job description attached, which is signed by the pastor and employee. To be valid, contracts must be signed by the pastor, employee and Director of the Office of Catechetics.
5. Employees called to military duty retain reinstatement rights as required by federal law.
6. Parishes use diocesan forms which are obtained free of charge from the Office of Catechetics.

COMPENSATION

GUIDELINES:

1. The Diocesan religious education committee establishes guidelines to assist parishes and new employees to determine an equitable salary. Salary is determined by negotiation between the pastor and employee according to the established guidelines. (Appendix B)
2. Part-time professional employees are selected in accord with the policies given for full-time professional personnel. Financial arrangements are pro-rated according to current diocesan salary guidelines.
3. When renewing contracts, salaries are adjusted to reflect changes in the cost of living, the employee's job description, experience and educational achievement.

LAY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The Diocese of Arlington provides a number of benefit programs to eligible employees. The following is a general guide to current benefits.

POLICY:

1. **The specific terms and conditions of employee benefit programs are subject to modification at the discretion of the diocese.**

GUIDELINES:

1. Information regarding benefits available to lay employees are contained in various plan documents which may be obtained from the Employee Benefits Office. For information concerning participation in any of these benefits, please contact Director of Employee Benefits, Catholic Diocese of Arlington, 200 North Glebe Road, Suite 613, Arlington, Virginia 22203.
Phone: (703) 841-2588
2. The following is a general guide to current benefits:
 - A. Health Care Plan: Hospital and Major Medical coverage is available to both individual and family membership. Employees working at least 30 hours per week are eligible for immediate participation in the plan within the first 31 days of employment. The employer and employee share the cost of the health premium. Personnel wishing to join the plan at a later date must submit an evidence of insurability form which is subject to review and acceptance and/or rejection by the insurer.
 - B. Life Insurance: Life insurance coverage in the amount of two times the annual salary plus accidental and dismemberment insurance coverage is available to all employees who work 30 or more hours per week. The cost of this coverage is paid for by the employer in full. Enrollment in the life insurance plan is a condition of employment.
 - C. Dental Insurance: Available to employees who work 30 or more hours per week. Enrollment must be made within the first 31 days of employment. The employer and employee share in the cost of the plan.

- D. Vision Insurance: Offered to employees who work 30 hours or more per week. The employee is responsible for the entire premium.
- E. Denti-Care: A prepaid dental program that has contracted with area dentists to provide dental services. Denti-Care is offered to all employees of the diocese. Single, one dependent and family coverage is available. The employee is responsible for the entire premium.
- F. Disability Insurance: Available to employees who work 30 or more hours per week. Enrollment is a condition of employment. This benefit is provided to the employee at no cost to the employee.
- G. Retirement Plan: The Catholic Diocese of Arlington provides a non-contributory retirement plan for lay employees. Participation in the Lay Employees' Retirement Plan of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington is a condition of employment. This benefit is provided to the employee at no cost to the employee.
- H. Tax Sheltered Annuities: Provides the participant the opportunity to invest own money for future retirement while deferring taxes.
- I. Unemployment Compensation: Provided to all employees of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. This benefit is provided to the employee at no cost to the employee.
- J. Individual Retirement Plan: Participation in an IRA offers the employee the opportunity for investment in a retirement plan through payroll deduction. Tax deferral will depend on the extent of each individual's tax liability.
- K. Workmen's Compensation: Provided to all employees of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington as stipulated by the Industrial Commission of Virginia. This benefit is provided at no cost to the employee.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Circumstances which are unpredictable and beyond human control may make it necessary for an employee to be absent from all professional duties for a given period of time.

POLICY:

The following categories of leave are intended to allow a temporary leave of absence to be granted consistent with the policy of the parish, and as a Christian response to the human needs of the faculty member.

1. Sick Leave: Each employee shall be allowed 13 days (4 hours bi-weekly) leave annually with pay. The maximum sick leave which can be accumulated is 960 hours and is transferable to any parish in the diocese. Documentation concerning an illness or absence may be required, at the discretion of the pastor.
2. Disability Leave: Employees who become disabled from performing their duties may utilize their accrued sick leave. Employees who remain disabled after exhausting their sick leave benefits may, with the approval of the parish and pastor, be granted leave without pay for a period of time not exceeding the duration of the period of disability. Pregnancy will be treated the same as other disabling conditions.
3. Parental Leave: Regular full-time and regular part-time employees may take up to one year of leave without pay for the purpose of caring for a newborn, or a newly adopted child. Vacation and sick leave will not accrue during such period. An employee requesting parental leave will be required to specify the anticipated date of **his/her** return to work. The parish will be obligated only to return the employee to the same or comparable position as the employee previously held, at an equivalent rate of pay, commencing on or about the date originally fixed by the employee for **his/her** anticipated return. The employee may request a return to work earlier than the original anticipated return date. In the event of such a request, the parish reserves the right to arrange and schedule the employee's return at such time, and under such circumstances, as the needs of the parish require.
4. Other Leave: Leaves of absence other than those described above may be granted in circumstances, and under conditions, approved by the pastor.

5. Annual Leave: All regular employees are entitled to and encouraged to take vacations with pay. Regular full-time employees earn annual leave in accordance with the schedule below.

Employment to 3rd anniversary:
(4 hours per pay period)

3rd to 15th anniversary:
(6 hours per pay period)

After 15th anniversary:
(8 hours per pay period)

Regular part-time employees earn annual leave in the ratio of their normal work week to the parish normal work week of forty hours. Temporary employees do not earn annual leave.

If employment is terminated by the employee or by the parish, accrued annual leave may be granted until it is exhausted, or a check for the accumulated leave may be issued.

Employees shall be allowed to accrue up to but not more than **240** hours (30 days) of vacation leave at the end of any calendar year.

Annual leave is taken in hourly increments.

No annual leave may be taken until a person is employed for two months or the probationary employment period is expired. Leave without pay may be taken during this initial period of two months.

EVALUATION

POLICY:

- 1. Each director of religious education/coordinator of religious education receives an evaluation annually. The process for evaluation is mutually agreed upon by the pastor and employee.**

- 2. Signed by the employer and employee, a written record of the evaluation becomes part of the employee's personnel record.**

RENEWAL, NON-RENEWAL AND TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS

In the event that either the employer or a professional catechetical employee of a parish desire to end the contracted relationship, both parties will benefit from a well defined procedure of due process.

POLICY:

The following renewal, non-renewal and termination procedures apply to catechetical employee contracts:

1. Contract Duration

All catechetical employee contracts shall be for a period stated in the contract, not to exceed one (1) year. Contracts for professional catechetical personnel shall be automatically renewed for the next ensuing year unless the employer gives written notice of intention not to renew, prior to April 1 of the then current year.

2. Termination of Contract

a. The contract of any individual, and the employment of any individual during the term of the contract, is subject to termination for any good cause, including, but not limited to, neglect of duty, inadequate or unsatisfactory performance, insubordination, serious illegal misconduct, dishonesty, or non-compliance with the policies or regulations of the diocese **and/or** parish.

b. In view of the unique and essential religious mission of the diocese and its parishes, any employee is subject to action up to and including discharge because of conduct or behavior which reflects adversely upon a parish, the diocese or the Church, or which interferes with the ability of a parish to perform its religious mission, or to maintain effectively the intimate working relationships of a parish and the Community of Faith. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to, immorality, the rejection of **official** Church laws or doctrine, or the teachings or practice or immorality, or rejection of **official** Church laws or doctrines.

- c. In any case or circumstances where questions concerning the factors described in paragraph 2b are involved, the Bishop of the Diocese (or his specific designee), notwithstanding any other procedure or policy, shall have the exclusive authority and discretion to determine the existence of good cause for action and the appropriate action to be taken.
 - d. In cases where immorality or serious illegal misconduct has been alleged to have occurred, the employee may be immediately suspended from all professional duties until the diocese has made a determination that the charges provide no basis for further action, or, in cases where civil or criminal legal proceedings are commenced, until such proceedings have been finally adjudicated or determined in a court or agency of competent jurisdiction.
 - e. If acquitted or exonerated in legal proceedings which caused the employee to remain on suspension from pay, the employee may petition the diocese for restoration of pay or benefits lost as a result of such suspension.
 - f. Any notice of termination shall include a copy of the appeal process.
3. Non-Renewal of a Contract
- a. An employee's contract will not be renewed when the employee does not meet diocesan employment standards and normal standards of professional performance. Employees must be given written notice of any deficiency and a reasonable opportunity to correct such deficiency.
 - b. Non-Renewal Procedure
 - 1) No later than April 1 of the current year the pastor shall give each employee written notice of the employer's intention to renew or not renew the employee's contract.
 - 2) All notices of non-renewal shall contain a statement of reasons for such action.
 - 3) The appeal process which follows shall be available to any employee receiving a notice of non-renewal provided the employee has been under contract for three (3) or more consecutive years in the same parish. Notices of non-renewal for such employees shall contain a copy of the appeal process.

4. Appeal Process - Termination or Non-Renewal
- a. The employee, within five **(5)** days, must notify the Director, Office of Catechetics, in writing if **he/she** wishes to appeal the decision to terminatelnon-renew.
 - b. Establishment of a hearing committee.
 - 1) The Director, Office of Catechetics must convene a hearing committee within ten **(10)** days of the receipt of the appeal.
 - 2) The committee shall be composed of the
 - pastor of another parish
 - director, Office of Catechetics or his or her designee
 - director of religious education of another parish
 - 3) If any of the above are unable to participate, the chairperson of the religious education committee will designate a replacement from the same category. The hearing committee's decision shall be made in writing and given to all parties within five (5) days.
 - 4) The hearing committee conducts an inquiry into the reasons for **termination/non-renewal** of an employee's contract. Either the employer or the employee may appeal an adverse decision of the hearing committee. No formal summary of the hearing is kept and the employee may be represented by an advisor of his or her choice.
 - 5) The committee's findings will be final and binding unless appeal is made to the religious education committee.
 - c. Appeal to the religious education committee
 - 1) Either party has five **(5)** days to appeal the decision of the hearing committee to the Director, Office of Catechetics, who will notify the chairperson of the religious education committee on the next working day. The religious education committee must be convened to hear the appeal within ten **(10)** days. At least seven voting members must be present to conduct the hearing. A decision, in writing, must be rendered within five (5) days and given to all parties.
 - 2) The decision of the religious education committee is final and binding on all parties.
 - 3) Definition of the term "day": The term "day" shall mean days other than Saturday, Sunday and any holidays which appear on the official parish calendar. During summer vacation, the term includes days other than Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays.

- 4) Documentation: The official personnel file shall be introduced as evidence in any appeal hearing. Nothing of a negative nature may be placed in the official personnel file without the employee seeing the item and affixing **his/her** signature to the item to signify that the item has been seen.
- 5) The letter of **termination/non-renewal** must specifically refer to the attachment of the appeal process.
- 6) Procedure for the Religious Education Committee
 - a) Each party to the dispute may be accompanied by an advisor of **his/her** choice.
 - b) Necessary Documentation
 - (1) The appeal party is responsible for delivering to the Office of Catechetics the following items forty-eight hours after filing an appeal:
 - character letters not previously submitted and,
 - all** written documents intended to be placed into evidence.

The religious education committee will be the final authority as to the relevance of any written material.

 - (2) The hearing committee shall submit the following items to the Office of Catechetics upon rendering its decision:
 - the employee's record;
 - decision of the hearing committee including any dissenting opinion; and
 - all** documentary evidence considered at the hearing.These hearing items will be considered part of the file before the religious education committee and need not be resubmitted by either party. The Director, Office of Catechetics, will mail to each religious education committee member a copy of all the above documents with the appeal date of the appeal hearing, five (5) days after notice for appeal has been given to **him/her**.
 - c) The parties, at the discretion of the chairperson, may provide additional information and witnesses at the hearing.

- d) The employer shall open the hearing with a brief oral summary of **his/her** position. The employee will then present **his/her** position. During the hearing, religious education committee members may question the parties and the witnesses. Parties and/or their advisors shall be entitled to question each other and the witnesses
- e) Each party to a dispute is entitled to be present during the entire hearing, but not at the religious education committee's deliberations which follow the hearing.
- f) A summary shall be kept of the hearing. Records of the hearing shall be kept in the Office of Catechetics for at least two (2) years.
- g) The chairperson of the religious education committee shall convey the decision of the religious education committee in writing to all parties to the dispute within five (5) days of the hearing.
- h) The final result of the religious education committee will be placed in the personnel file of the employee.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

POLICY:

- 1: Complete personnel records for each catechetical employee, both full-time and part-time, are maintained by the employing parish. These records are confidential; however, employees may have free access to their records upon giving 24-hour notice to their employer. The administrator should be present during the examination of records.
 - a. Personnel records shall include:
 - 1) application form including **3** letters of reference
 - 2) current transcript of credits
 - 3) religion certification records
 - 4) original of signed evaluations
 - 5) copy of contract
 - 6) letters and memoranda concerning employee performance
 - 7) cumulative sick leave record
 - 8) verification of legal status for employment (I-9)
2. Copies of the complete personnel records for the above-mentioned employees are filed at the Office of Catechetics.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

POLICY:

1. Professional employees further professional development by continued studies through attendance at diocesan conferences and workshops, institutes, **in-**services, **and/or** college courses, and attendance at other recognized educational meetings and conferences relevant to their role as a catechetical leader in the parish, and through membership in various professional associations.
2. Directors of religious **education/coordinators** of religious education maintain membership in the Association of Ministers and Coordinators of the Diocese of Arlington (MCRE).
3. Parishes provide an adequate budget for the professional development of the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education.

PERSONNEL POLICIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

RATIONALE

Consistent orderly procedures for the recruitment, selection, supervision and evaluation of volunteers contribute to clarification of mutual expectations, establish an objective basis for evaluation and provide volunteers with periodic opportunities to recommit or to discontinue volunteer activities. These factors should, over the long term, increase volunteer satisfaction and facilitate recruitment and retention of volunteers.

RECRUITMENT

GUIDELINES

The director of religious education recruits and designates a volunteer recruitment coordinator whose year-round task will be to recruit and enlist other volunteers for the ongoing needs of the catechetical programs. Alternatively, parish religious education committees establish a volunteer recruitment subcommittee.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

POLICY:

1. Each parish has an accurate, clear job description for each volunteer position in the catechetical program. Job descriptions indicate: skills required, time commitment (hours per week), duration of commitment (not to exceed one year), ancillary commitments (**e.g.** progress toward diocesan certification) and what support the volunteer can expect from the parish.

INTERVIEW OF PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS

POLICY:

All prospective volunteers are interviewed by the director of religious education prior to assumption of any role in catechetical programs. During this interview the director of religious education:

1. Reviews the job description with the potential volunteer.
2. Outlines expectations and opportunities to achieve diocesan certification (for catechists).
3. Fulfills the requirements of the diocesan Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse, as currently interpreted by the Chancery.

EVALUATION

1. Each volunteer receives an evaluation annually.
2. Volunteers are offered the opportunity to evaluate their experience, what was rewarding, what was challenging, helpful, frustrating, etc., annually.

TRAINING

To be developed.

ADMINISTRATION OF CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

PARTICIPATION

POLICY:

1. ELIGIBILITY:
 - a. All members of the parish are eligible to participate in the parish catechetical programs.
 - b. Children and youth from outside the parish may be accepted into the program with the consent of the pastor.
 - c. Acceptance of families shall not be based on the ability of the family to pay a tuition nor shall it be based on a mandated amount of financial support to the parish.
2. REQUIREMENTS:

A child or youth entering the program for the first time must present **his/her** baptismal certificate.
3. REGISTRATION:

The director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education is responsible for registration and admission. Each program shall have a well-publicized registration period for new families.

RECORDS

POLICY:

1. MAINTENANCE:
 - a. The accuracy, privacy and confidentiality of each child's records are preserved. Information to be included in the record includes name, telephone listing, date and place of birth, names of **parent(s)** or **guardian(s)**, etc.
 - b. Records such as completed registration forms, records of attendance, scores, and other pertinent information relating to the child's progress in the program are included.
 - c. Record of the reception of the sacraments for the first time is noted in the records.
2. TRANSFER:
 - a. When a child transfers to another parish, a copy of the child's permanent record card is completed and given to the child's parent.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

POLICY:

1. The catechist and director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education are responsible for the ongoing evaluation of each child's progress. This information is communicated to the **parents/guardians** at regular intervals.

2. Program leaders prepare and distribute a handbook for children and parents which contains the parish policies and procedures in regard to catechesis.

This handbook includes the parish philosophy and mission statement for catechetical programs, (cf.202) **as well as** details of the catechetical sessions, rules of behavior, sacramental policies and other policies and procedures affecting children and parents.

3. All local policies and procedures are in conformity with diocesan policies and guidelines.

ATTENDANCE

POLICY:

1. At least 30 hours of age appropriate, formal catechesis are offered and available each year to each child and youth.
2. The catechists have responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance in the program.
3. The program administrator (director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education) has the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance of accurate attendance records in the permanent record file of each student.
4. The parish makes every effort to encourage regular participation in the parish program.
5. The parish has a written policy regarding minimum required attendance and movement to the next level of the program.
6. The parish makes every effort to monitor participation and as soon as a pattern of non-participation emerges, every effort is made to meet the parents to discuss the matter.

EARLY RELEASE FROM THE PROGRAM

POLICY:

1. Prudent care is taken in regard to early dismissal from any parish sponsored program.
 - a. The program administrator grants early dismissal to a child only if the request is made in writing by the **parent(s)** or **guardians(s)**. The request states the reason, the date and time involved. This written request is kept on file.
 - b. A child is never released early without the explicit knowledge of **his/her parent/guardian**. Children may not go home for assignments, books, or disciplinary reasons.
2. Under no circumstances may a child be released to anyone other than the parent (or parent with legal custody) or guardian as listed on the family record card for the child unless authorization in writing is provided by the parent for the release of the child to anyone who is not the parent or the guardian.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned to enhance the catechetical program and expand the religious experiences of the child.

POLICY:

1. A permission form signed by a child's parent is obtained prior to the child's participation in a field trip. (Sample form, see Appendix D).
2. Each field trip must be adequately supervised.
3. Whenever possible, bus transportation is used. If a commercial carrier is used, the carrier provides a certificate of insurance noting "Additional Insured." The correct wording (no abbreviations are allowed) for the additional insured reads **as** follows: "The Most Reverend John R. Keating, Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia and His Successors in **office**."
4. If **automobiles/vehicles** of church personnel, youth and/or parents are to be utilized to transport children on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners have liability, medical and uninsured motorist insurance coverage, and evidence to this effect is presented to the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education for review and approval prior to the use of the vehicle.
5. Overnight events for junior and senior high students may be scheduled only with the permission of both the pastor and the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education. No overnight events such **as** retreats, lock-ins, etc. are allowed for children under grade seven. Parishes with schools take into consideration the policy of the Office of Catholic Schools when planning events involving grades seven and eight.

DISCIPLINE

The ideal of discipline within Catholic education is to enable children to move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline to discipleship. Children first learn appropriate behavior through someone or something outside themselves. As soon as they are sufficiently mature, they are helped to govern their conduct from within themselves so that they can live responsibly. Ultimately, opportunities are provided which lead them to look beyond themselves to principled living, as exemplified by Jesus Christ.

POLICY:

1. Each program formulates a set of rules and regulations regarding discipline consistent with parish philosophy, and diocesan policies and guidelines. These rules are distributed annually in writing to children and parents and on the occasion of admitting new children.

2. The catechist manages the discipline problems of **his/her** classroom and enlists the help of the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education only in cases involving serious breach or repeated misbehavior. The catechist and director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education view well-prepared and well-conducted classes as the first step toward good classroom discipline.
 - a. The child's right to fair treatment is a fundamental consideration in all disciplinary procedures.
 - b. Parental involvement occurs early in disciplinary action.
 - c. Disciplinary action is corrective, rather than punitive, with emphasis on developing, within the child, responsibility for **his/her** own behavior.
 - d. Consideration is given to the desirability of psychological evaluation of the child with recurring problems.

3. In cases where a child is continually disruptive of others, the teacher considers the following factors in determining a course of action:

- a. The child's physical and emotional well-being.
 - b. The child's learning style and needs.
 - c. The home environment of the child.
 - d. The classroom environment, including the relationship between the teacher and the child, between the child and other class members, and the teacher's presentation and teaching "style".
4. Disciplinary measures do not inflict bodily harm, subject the child to ridicule, or use punishment for punishment's sake. The following actions are explicitly forbidden:
- a. Corporal punishment,
 - b. Personal indignities **and/or** public humiliation,
 - c. Sending a child outside of the classroom where **he/she** will not be supervised,
 - d. Busy work of a purely repetitive nature,
 - e. Indiscriminate punishment of all pupils in a class for the disruptive conduct of one,
 - f. Sending a child home without the knowledge of the parents.

GUIDELINE

1. Teachers will find that a few rules consistently enforced and, depending on the age of the child, evaluated and "renegotiated" from time to time with the class, will be very effective in upholding everyone's rights and responsibilities.

SUSPENSION/DISMISSAL

Discipline in the catechetical program reflects charity and justice toward the individual child and his/her family. However, in charity and justice to the other children, circumstances may dictate that a child be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular setting. At all times, the child's right to fair treatment is preserved.

POLICY:

1. In cases where a child is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the catechist apprises the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education of the situation and assists in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation. The following are some approved disciplinary measures:
 - a. Conference with pupil
 - b. Conference with parents
 - c. Probation
 - d. Dismissal

2. If a director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education believes it necessary to dismiss a child the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education:
 - a. meets with the child and the child's parents about the child's action.
 - b. provides written notice to the parents of the decision to dismiss the child.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The widespread misuse of drugs and alcohol makes it imperative for a parish catechetical program to recognize the problem and deal with its solution. A program of education will make the children and youth aware of the personal danger involved in alcohol and drug abuse and of his/her responsibility to contribute positively to society.

The parish recognizes all federal, state and local laws with regard to the use of drugs and alcohol. While providing a constructive program of education, parish programs also face the problem of dealing with children and youth who have become involved in drug and alcohol abuse.

POLICY:

1. Participants in catechesis may not possess, use, transmit or be under the influence of illegal drugs on the parish grounds, activity bus or at any parish related activity.
2. Any participant in a parish catechetical program who shall possess, buy, or sell drugs or alcohol, or is suspected of possession or consumption, buying or selling of drugs or alcohol on parish property or at a parish-sponsored function, shall be referred immediately to the program administrator for action.
3. If illegal drugs are confiscated, the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education or delegate does so with a witness present, if possible. Parents are notified and, when appropriate, the proper law enforcement agency is contacted.
4. The parish assists the children by providing opportunities for guidance and counseling.

STUDENT PRIVACY

POLICY:

1. Searches of children and children's property:

The director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education or designated officials have the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of parish patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a child's person **and/or** personal property (**e.g.** automobiles, etc.) while on parish property or at parish activities may be conducted by the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education or other designated officials. It is only necessary that the search be reasonable and related to the parish rights in these regards. The failure of a child to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

PREGNANCY

POLICY:

Any child who becomes pregnant during the time she is enrolled in a catechetical program will be given every opportunity to continue her participation in the program.

FIRE SAFETY**POLICY:**

- 1.** Appropriate telephone numbers for the police and fire departments are posted. When the catechetical program is using premises which serve a catholic school, responsibility for posting is assumed by the school.
- 2.** Fire drills are conducted at least once a year.
 - a. Catechists and children are familiar with the fire bell signals. Each room and hallway has fire drill routes posted.
 - b. An orderly evacuation of a building under supervision of each catechist is imperative. Catechists take the attendance list with them, and once outside, call roll to account for each child.
 - c. During the fire drill everyone vacates the building. All windows and doors are closed.
- 3.** Fire extinguishers are serviced yearly. All volunteer staff and members are instructed of the location and correct use of the extinguishers.
- 4.** All fire doors on stairways are closed at all times.
- 5.** Any chains are removed from all doors while sessions are in progress.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the responsibility of the director of religious education/coordinator of religious education that all parish educational personnel know exactly what to do in an emergency. Emergency procedures and police, fire department and rescue squad phone numbers are posted.

POLICY:

1. Accidents and First Aid:
 - a. The director of religious education/coordinator of religious education or program administrator is notified immediately in case of an accident during a catechetical function.
 - b. Parents are notified of the **accident/injury** as soon as possible.
 - c. Basic first aid is administered when appropriate.
 - d. The director of religious education/coordinator of religious education keeps a written record of the circumstances of all accidents (**e.g.**, date, time, injured party, immediate cause, involved parties, supervisory volunteer or staff and treatment or action taken).

2. Communicable Disease:
 - a. Children excluded from regular school attendance do not participate in parish catechesis.

3. Medical Conditions:
 - a. Parents inform the director of religious education/coordinator of religious education in writing if there is a medical reason why their children cannot participate in any activity, or if their children have severe food allergies.

4. Traffic/Pedestrian/Bus Safety:
 - a. Adult monitors shall be assigned to ensure the safety of children and youth at dismissal.

5. Security:
 - a. Each parish must formulate a policy to promote the safety and security of children, personnel and visitors.

6. Bomb Threats:
 - a. In the event of a bomb threat, all children and other building occupants are immediately evacuated. Police are summoned by the director of religious **education/coordinator** of religious education or delegate.

STUDENT CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

POLICY:

At the time of entry into the program, the director of religious education/coordinator of religious education obtains a signed form from the registering parent for any child for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any child not residing with his/her parent.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

RATIONALE

Public relations of and for parish religious education consists in the promotion of goodwill and favorable relationships between the religious education programs and clergy, parishioners, the public, and the Church at large.

Public relation activities have their basis in the mission of the Church (Matt 28:19, 20) to witness and teach and the commandment of love of neighbor (Mark 12:31) to care and share.

The conscious and systematic fulfillment of public relations involves explanatory and interpretive communications, friendly interchanges, and assessment of people's needs and wants with consequent suitable responses.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

GUIDELINES

1. The responsibility for parish religious education public relations rests ultimately with the pastor.
2. The proximate and operative responsibility rests with the parish director/coordinator of religious education, the parish committee of religious education and any formally designated person or task force.
3. Public relations responsibilities primarily cover activities within a given parish; secondarily they extend to the public and Church at large.
4. When public relations in religious education involve the diocese, the Office of Catechetics is informed and permission obtained before the public relations action is performed.

EXPLANATORY AND INTERPRETIVE COMMUNICATIONS

GUIDELINES

1. Parish public relations deal with the communication of relevant materials to explain and interpret the policies and activities of the religious education programs for such purposes as: establishing and maintaining goodwill, inviting attention to the goals of religious education, seeking parishioners' support, and gaining volunteers. Those to whom such communications need to be directed include: the pastor and clergy, the pastoral council, parents, and parishioners.
2. Public relations involve such communication instruments as: newsletters, religious education handbooks, letters to parishioners, displays, and reports to parents and to the parish.
3. When feasible and with the approval of the pastor, media releases may be made concerning the activities of the parish religious education programs to the public at large.

FRIENDLY INTERCHANGES

GUIDELINES

1. Friendly or fellowship relationships promote good community and favorable public relations.
2. Through various kinds of meetings and celebrations a key purpose of public relations is to keep morale high among catechists and other personnel involved in religious education.
3. In a similar way a good reputation for the religious education programs is maintained in the parish at large. To preserve this repute public relations strive to eliminate sources of irritation and complaint.
4. Among the means to promote friendly relationships are the involvement of parents and other parishioners in such activities as workshops, committees for various activities, open house, plays and demonstrations.
5. When occasions warrant those concerned make proper representations to the pastor, pastoral council, the pastoral team, etc. for the purpose of maintaining favorable dispositions for the religious education programs.

ASSESSMENTS AND RESPONSES

GUIDELINES

1. An important aspect of public relations is listening to the needs and wants of various publics, e.g. clergy, pastoral council, parishioners, the Church as a whole. Such listening includes an interpretation of the signs of the times.
2. Those concerned with public relations are aware of contemporary trends, the vision of the parish, cultural views, and various levels of faith among those that the religious education programs serve.
3. Responses to the above assessments on the part of those concerned with public relations are reviewed on a regular basis and adjusted when prudence requires, in order to maintain goodwill and favorable relationships.

PLANNING, BUDGET AND FINANCES

RATIONALE

Organizational structures are needed to achieve the goals and ideals of catechesis. Planning is an essential part of any serious organizational effort. Certain elements are common to all planning systems:

- * a clear understanding of the essential mission and major objectives;
- * assessment of needs, as well as current and potential resources;
- * identification of long and short-range goals, rated according to priority;
- * establishment of a budget which reflects available resources;
- * establishment of favorable conditions for carrying out activities;
- * periodic review and evaluation;
- * restatement of goals and activities when necessary.

(c.f. National Catechetical Directory, #220, 222)

PLANNING

GUIDELINES

1. Assessment of needs and resources, goal setting, planning, implementation and evaluation are continuing processes.
2. Structures flow from need and are suited to the achievement of stated goals.
3. All programs are evaluated annually vis à vis the philosophy and mission statement, program goals, participant/parent and staff expectation and objective outcomes where applicable.

BUDGET

POLICY:

1. The director of religious education develops an annual income and expense budget for catechetical programs which reflects coordinated planning for all programs, program development and catechist enrichment and development.

2. Reviewed by the parish religious education committee, the parish finance committee, and approved by the pastor, the budget becomes the basis for actual implementation of the program.

FINANCES

POLICY:

1. Parents share in the cost of parish catechetical programs through payment of tuition and fees.
2. Tuition charges and fees are established locally by each parish.
3. No one is denied opportunity to receive catechesis because of inability to pay.
4. The **parish** provides funding to support comprehensive, quality programs of catechesis for children, youth and adults including those with special needs.

DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON
NORMS FOR CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

In the sacraments, the Church celebrates God's saving and transforming presence through the passion, death and resurrection of Christ and offers the faithful access to divine grace. The purpose of the sacraments is to nourish, strengthen and express faith. By the very act of celebration, the sacraments dispose the faithful to receive grace in fruitful manner. to worship God duly and to practice charity. (Sacrosanctum Concilium 59) In the experience of the sacraments then, the Church comes in ever increasing ways to deepen her identity and mission as the Body of Christ.

The Church helps Inquirers, those seeking membership in the Church, to recognize God present in their lives, and in the life of the parish community, especially in the celebration of the sacraments. Through the initiation process, catechumens reflect on their call to conversion, learn prayer and listen to the Word of God. The local church leads the initiates through rites and rituals to the Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Children of catechetical age, not yet baptized, are prepared for and celebrate the sacraments of initiation through a process similar to that for adults. The rites however, are adapted to the situation and readiness of each child. Concurrently, the Church continues the sacramental practice of receptions of Baptism (shortly after birth), First Penance preceding First Eucharist (at the age of reason), and Confirmation (at a later age).

1. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

- 1.1 The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults with its rituals and periods of coming to faith provides the normal way in which unbaptized adults are initiated into the Church.
- 1.2 Suitable adaptations are made regarding already baptized Christians who seek full communion with the Church.
- 1.3 In the Rites, those seeking the sacraments of initiation (catechumens) are ritually distinguished from those, already baptized, seeking full communion (candidates).
- 1.4 In baptizing adults, confirmation is celebrated immediately and Eucharist is given to the adult believer. (Can 866, 883)
- 1.5 Children of catechetical age, not already baptized, are initiated by the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Confirmation is not delayed. (Can 866, RCIA 306) ("What is prescribed in the canons on the baptism of an adult is applicable to all who are no longer infants but have attained the use of reason" (Can 852.1))
- 1.6 On the first Sunday of Lent, the diocesan Church celebrates The Rite of Election and the Affirmation of Candidates for Full Communion at the cathedral with the bishop.
- 1.7 The Easter Vigil is considered the proper time for the sacraments of initiation and, as a rule, adults are baptized in their own parish church. (Can 850, 857.2, RCIA 49)

2. Infant Baptism

- 2.1 Instruction and preparation for Baptism is a vital concern of the Church, particularly the local community which nourishes the faith received from the apostles. (Christian Initiation, General Introduction 4,7)
- 2.2 Parents preparing to give birth inform their pastor of the coming birth and prepare themselves spiritually. Catechesis and preparation for the sacrament of Baptism is directed to the new parents, and is provided by the parish community.
- 2.3 Supported by the parish community, parents bear the responsibility to awaken their children's faith, to begin their religious initiation and to form their conscience.
- 2.4 If possible, Baptism takes place on Sunday in a communal celebration for all the recently born children and in the presence of the faithful. (Rite of Baptism for Children, 32) It is recommended that the sacrament be celebrated during the Easter Vigil. (RBC 9)

3. Sacraments for Already Baptized Children

First Reception of Penance and Eucharist

- 3.1 Catechesis is offered for the reception of Penance and Eucharist once children have reached the age of reason. (Can 914)
- 3.2 All members of the Body of Christ have a role in the Christian initiation of children, especially parents, catechists, pastors and the local parish community.
 - 3.21 Parents, as the primary educators of their children, have the right and the duty to be intimately involved in preparation, discernment of readiness and celebration of the rites.
 - 3.22 The parish community prays for the children and provides programs intended specifically to help parents in their catechetical role.
 - 3.23 Pastors and catechists support parents in the provision of catechesis to their children and determining readiness for reception. (Can 774, 776, 835. 843, National Catechetical Directory 122)
- 3.3 Catechesis for each sacrament is conducted separately, since each sacrament is defined by its own significance, ritual shape and preparation. Catechesis continues yearly inasmuch as the sacraments require lifelong participation and study. (NCD 122)
- 3.4 Catechesis promotes an active, conscious, genuine participation in the rites, by unfolding the liturgical symbols and rituals and by forming the minds of the faithful for prayer, thanksgiving, repentance, for a community spirit and for understanding correctly the meaning of the creeds. (General Catechetical Directory, 25)
- 3.5 Catechesis is adapted to the age, need, culture and capability of each child and family.
- 3.6 In regard to the celebration of the sacraments, the regulations of the Church are explained to the children, and the custom of the parish regarding manner of dress respected so as not to obscure the real significance of reception of the sacrament as the central action of each rite.

- 3.61 Regarding sacramental confession, parents help their child decide how to confess; either through a face to face exchange with the priest or, anonymously through a grill.
- 3.62 Confessionals with a screen must be freely accessible to all penitents, and in every case the freedom of the penitent is to be respected.
- 3.63 Regarding reception of Holy Communion, parents help their child decide how the child will receive the host and how (or whether) to share in the cup.
- 3.64 Standing or kneeling to receive Holy Communion is established by parish custom; the particular custom established is to be observed by all communicants.
- 3.7 Special care is shown in the catechesis of developmentally disabled persons. Religious readiness is indicated by a recognition of the "specialness" of the sacrament to be received.
- 3.8 The Sacrament of Penance can be very fruitful in the lives of developmentally disabled persons. When they approach the priest, if they have poor communication skills, a question which elicits a "yes" or "no" can be very effective. When the celebration is adapted to the communication and relational gifts and limitations of those present, they can effectively celebrate the merciful love of the Lord for all God's children. Catechesis appropriate to the needs of the individual and special opportunities to celebrate the sacrament are offered in parishes throughout the diocese in diocesan supported special religious education (SPRED) programs.

4. Confirmation

- 4.1 For children baptized as infants, Confirmation is normally celebrated during the seventh or eighth grade. (Chancery Policy and Reference Book)
- 4.2 Catechesis for Confirmation emphasizes the sacrament's relationship to Baptism and Eucharist and its place in the initiation of Christians into the Church.
- 4.3 The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. He may grant the faculty to administer this sacrament to priests as necessity requires.
 - 4.31 "The following have the faculty of administering confirmation by the law itself: 1. within the limits of their territory, those who are equivalent in law to the diocesan bishop; 2. with regard to the person in question, the presbyter who by reason of office or mandate of the diocesan bishop baptizes one who is no longer an infant or one already baptized whom he admits into the full communion of the Catholic Church; 3. with regard to those in danger of death, the pastor or indeed any presbyter." (Can 883)
 - 4.32 In the case of marriage of an unconfirmed Catholic, permission to confirm may be sought from the bishop by the pastor so that, if they can do so without serious inconvenience, Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament receive it before being admitted to marriage. (Can 1065.1)]

- 4.4 Catechesis and celebration of Confirmation is more effective with the involvement of the total parish community. Within the community, the candidates themselves, parents, sponsors, catechists and pastor have unique roles in preparation and celebration of the sacrament.
 - 4.41 Parents, as the primary educators of their children, have the right and the duty to be intimately involved in preparation, discernment of readiness and celebration of the rites.
 - 4.42 The parish community prays for the candidates, and provides programs intended specifically to help parents in their catechetical role.
 - 4.43 The sponsor brings the candidate to receive the sacrament and presents the candidate to the minister.
 - 4.44 Pastors and catechists support parents in the provision of catechesis to their children and discerning readiness for reception. (Can 774, 776, 835. 843, National Catechetical Directory 122)
 - 4.45 Candidates for the sacrament demonstrate their desire for the sacrament through active participation in the catechetical formation program of the parish or school.
- 4.5 Candidates for Confirmation share in the mission of the Church by a service project in the parish or local community. An attitude of service is taught, more than a prerequisite number of volunteer hours.
- 4.6 Catechesis for Confirmation is developed in relationship to the ongoing catechetical/youth ministry program of the parish and parish school. This program is distinct from, but integrated with other components of youth catechesis.
 - 4.61 The immediate preparation for Confirmation begins no earlier than one year prior to reception. Appropriate preparation is available to those who have delayed reception of Confirmation.
 - 4.62 Candidates for Confirmation must be baptized, properly instructed, and have the ability to renew their baptismal promises.
 - 4.63 Each candidate is presented for Confirmation by a sponsor who is at least 16 years of age and a confirmed member of the Catholic Church. Sponsors may be male or female. Parents may not be a sponsor for their own child.
 - 4.64 Candidates may choose a new name at Confirmation or reaffirm their baptismal name.
- 4.7 Persons who are developmentally disabled, who have been baptized, are full members of the Church who belong and contribute according to their capacity. Each is confirmed as a member according to his or her capacity. Appropriate preparation and opportunities to celebrate the sacrament are offered in parishes throughout the diocese in diocesan supported special religious education (SPRED) programs.

DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON
GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SALARIES
OF PARISH CATECHETICAL EMPLOYEES

The attached work sheet is intended to be used as a basis for discussion between the pastor and the parish religious education staff person to develop a mutually agreed upon annual salary.

Salary information is based on the assumption of a 12 month, full-time position. Adjustments should be made for those who work fewer months or less than full-time.

The final salary will reflect the actual responsibilities of the staff person, principles of just compensation, and the resources of the parish.

SUGGESTED PROCESS

1. Pastor and staff person individually review the work sheet.
2. Pastor and staff person meet to discuss the work sheet and agree upon an annual salary.
3. Pastor confirms the salary in writing to the staff person and the figure is included in the budget.
4. In subsequent years the salary is adjusted according to the following factors:
 1. cost of living;
 2. change in responsibilities - additions or subtractions;
 3. further academic achievement or work related training;
 4. annual performance evaluation.

SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES FOR DETERMINING JUST COMPENSATION

At the very simplest level, there are two principles that need to be held in balance when determining just compensation for Church employees. The final report of The National Project on Just Wages and Benefits for Lay and Religious Church Employees notes that "the first concept, '**equal pay for equal work,**' is rooted in our economic and legal systems in the United States and plays a major role in our laws of equitable treatment. The second concept, '**compensation based upon need,**' is rooted in Catholic heritage and Church doctrine."

The report suggests an application of these two principles whereby the salary of an employee will be based upon the concept of equal pay for equal work, and the benefits provided as part of the compensation package will be based upon the needs of the employee and his or her dependents.

**DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON
GUIDELINES
SALARY WORK SHEET 1992-1993**

EDUCATION/TRAINING/EXPERIENCE **RANGE \$15,000.-\$25,000.** **\$ _____**
 (amount determined after discussion)

Religious Education/theology or related field

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Other 2 year certificate program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masters degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced catechetical Diocesan certificate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Institutes/workshops/conferences (within last 5 years) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years undergraduate work | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EPS (Education for Parish Service) | |

EXPERIENCE **RANGE 0-\$5000** **\$ _____**
 (amount determined after discussion)

Credit for up to 10 yrs. full or part-time paid experience in **this** field.
 Credit for up to 5 yrs. full/part-time paid experience in **related** field.
 Credit for years of experience as a volunteer in this field.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION **RANGE 0-\$2,000.** **\$ _____**
 (amount determined after discussion)

Overall direction and administration.
 Program development: assessment, planning and evaluation.
 Develop, present and manage budget.
 Develop original curriculum materials where needed.
 Coordinate selection of curriculum materials.
 Communicate with parents on a regular basis.
 Coordinate the scheduling of sessions, facilities, and assignment of students.
 Maintain accurate records on enrollment, personnel, budget, equipment and resources.

Check areas for which the employee is responsible:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-school/Kindergarten | A d u l t s |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Religious Education | <input type="checkbox"/> RCIA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary (1-6) | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Catechesis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catechetical program in Catholic School | <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impaired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High catechetics (7-8) | <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior High catechetics (9-12) | B i b l e S c h o o l |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Liturgy of the Word |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Catechumenate | O t h e r _____ |

PERSONNEL SUPERVISION/EVALUATION: **RANGE 0-\$1000** **\$ _____**
 (amount determined after discussion)

Other professional staff **V o l u n t e e r c a t e c h i s t s**
 Secretarial staff/support staff **O t h e r v o l u n t e e r s**

CATECHIST RECRUITMENT/DEVELOPMENT RANGE 0-\$2,000.

\$ _____

(amount determined after discussion)

Oversee the recruiting and orientation of catechists
 Plan and implement catechist inservice programs toward Diocesan Catechist Certification
 Conduct regular planning meeting with catechists
 Encourage catechists to attend Diocesan and other inservice opportunities.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION/INITIATION RANGE 0-\$2,000.

\$ _____

(amount determined after discussion)

Plan and implement catechetical sessions for parent preparation/or adult initiation.
 Recruit and train the presenting team
 Assist in the planning and celebration of liturgical events

Check which of the following areas apply:

R C I A	Children's Catechumenate
Baptism of infants	First Eucharist
Confirmation of adults	First Penance
confirmation of youth	Marriage Preparation

SIZE/COMPLEXITY OF PROGRAM

RANGE 0-\$1,000.

\$ _____

(amount determined after discussion)

Enrollment: 50-300, 300-500, 500-800, 800+
 Number of catechists: 5-30, 30-50, 50-80, 80+
 Number of sites for sessions: parish buildings, homes, other
 Complexity of schedule: # of days of the week, # of times in a day

RELATIONSHIPS/ACCOUNTABILITY

RANGE 0-\$1,000.

\$ _____

(amount determined after discussion)

What are expectations of a person's interaction and accountability beyond relationship and accountability to the pastor?

Parish staff (meetings, shared planning, etc.)
 Education Committee
 Pastoral Council
 Catholic School/principal
 Youth Minister
 Diocesan Office of Catechetics
 ___ Liturgical Committee
 Other _____

BENEFITS

Life ___Dental
 Health ___Continuing professional/educational stipend
 Vision ___Vacation/holidays

**DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON
OFFICE OF CATECHETICS**

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

THIS CONTRACT, made in triplicate this _____ day of _____, 19____,
by and between the undersigned employer ("Employer") of _____

and _____
whose address is _____
hereinafter called "Director."

WITNESSETH:

That for the considerations hereinafter set forth, the parties hereto agree as follows:

- Employer hereby hires Director and Director hereby accepts employment in the Parish designated below for a term of _____ months beginning _____
2. That for and in consideration of the services to be performed by reason of this contract, the Director shall be paid a salary of _____ dollars (\$_____, per year, payable in _____ equal installments. There shall be deducted therefrom withholding taxes, social security taxes, local taxes where applicable, the premium for the medical insurance plan of the Diocese if the Director is eligible to, and agrees to, participate therein, and all other amounts required by law.
 3. The services to be performed shall be those required by the employer and described in the Job Description attached to this contract, and those services required by the rules and regulations of the Office of Catechetics.
 4. The Employer agrees to permit the Director's absence from parish duties during the time required for participation in diocesan sponsored programs and Employer agrees to defray actual direct expense of the Director's participation not exceeding _____ (\$_____) per diem.
 5. The Director is entitled to _____ weeks of vacation leave, _____ days of medical leave, and _____ days of personal leave annually, which must be taken in accordance with Employer's practices regarding accrual, advance notice/scheduling, etc.

6. The Director acknowledges that he/she has been provided with a summary of other available employee benefits, which are administered through the Diocesan Office of Employee Benefits.

7. Except as modified herein, this contract of employment shall be subject to the terms and conditions contained in the current publication of "Educational Policies and Directives (of the) Diocese of Arlington (1976, as revised).

8. This paragraph supersedes and replaces all contract renewal provisions in the Policy Handbook. This contract shall not be automatically renewed upon its expiration. The Director shall give written notice to the Employer between March 15 and April 1 of the current contract year of Director's request to have his/her contract renewed, or of the Director's decision not to seek renewal of the contract. Employer must respond by April 15 to a contract renewal request, and the Employer may modify any terms of this contract for the renewal year.

9. This contract may be terminated by Employer for just cause at any time upon 30 days written notice. Just cause is interpreted to include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. incompetency
- b. Dishonesty
- c. Immorality
- d. Noncompliance with the regulations and policies of the Diocese.

In instances of gross misconduct (e.g., criminal offenses), the Director is subject to any disciplinary actions the Employer deems appropriate, in his discretion, up to and including immediate termination.

10. This contract shall be of no force or effect until signed by the Pastor and the Director. The Director, Office of Catechetics, must also counter-execute this contract to confirm that the Director meets minimum educational standards of the Diocese, and proper notification to his/her office has been provided.

WITNESS the following signatures:

_____ Parish _____ Date _____
Pastor

_____ Date _____
Director

_____ Date _____
Director, Office of Catechetics

"PARISH" PARENT/GUARDIAN RELEASE FORM

YOUTH NAME: _____ GRADE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ DATE: _____

I, _____, hereby give my consent as the parent/guardian of _____, for him/her to participate in this (Event) _____ on (Date) _____

It is understood that all possible caution will be taken by those persons in charge to prevent injuries, but neither the chaperones, nor the parish will be held responsible in case of an accident.

I hereby authorize any adult representative of (Parish) _____ to consent to any medical treatment of above named youth which in the judgement of a recognized medical facility, under the general or special supervision of a licensed physician, may be deemed necessary.

EMERGENCY PHONE # _____

Any Allergies: _____

Any Medication: _____

Insurance Co: _____

Family Phycian: _____ **Phone#:** _____

I also understand that if the behavior of my young person causes any disruption in the planned activity, I will be called at once to come and pick up my young person at the site of the activity.

SIGNED _____
Parent/Guardian Date

APPENDIX E

Appendix E contains position descriptions for Ministers/Directors of Religious Education, Grade Level Coordinators and Catechists. Samples include general guidelines and examples of adaptations suited to the needs of a particular parish to assist you in designing appropriate job descriptions for your parish.

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JOB ANALYSIS

(to be attached to Contract)

1. General purpose: The Minister is responsible for organizing and developing the religious education program for the youth and adults of _____ parish.
2. Specific responsibilities which will differ for individual parishes:
 - a. Implement elementary school religion program: in school, in religious education program
 - b. Implement high school program
 - c. Set up adult program
 - d. Register students
 - e. Recruit and train teachers
 - f. Develop retreat programs
 - g. Draw up a budget for the program
 - h. Purchase materials
 - i. Help with the development of parish liturgy
 - j. Be a resource person

The normal work week should consist of five days for a total of forty hours, but the time and method of establishing a schedule may be mutually adjusted.

3. Responsible to: The Minister shall be responsible to the pastor for the fulfillment of these responsibilities and shall submit an annual projection of the total religious education program under the minister's responsibility together with its budget.

The Pastor, in conjunction with the parish Religious Education Committee, has the responsibility to approve the projected religious education program. Once approved, the Minister has the responsibility to implement it.

4. Evaluation: The Minister shall present a complete evaluation of the year's program to the Pastor and Religious Education Committee each spring.

5. Relationship within the parish.
 - a. The Pastor. The Minister shall keep in mind that the pastor has the prime responsibility for the spiritual development of the people of the parish, and the Minister shall consult with the pastor regarding the progress of the religious education program.
 - b. The Associate Pastor will be the religious education moderator, as such. . .
 - c. Principal of . . .
 - d. Liturgist . . .
 - e. Committee for Catholic Education. . .
 - f. Other. . .
6. Relationship outside parish.
 - a. Office of Catechetics: The Minister shall consult with the Office of Catechetics regarding youth and adult programs and teacher development and shall participate in diocesan programs for professional development of ministers.

The Minister should be available to help implement diocesan programs when reasonable requests by the Office of Catechetics are made.
7. Other parish responsibilities (meetings, committee, memberships, etc.)
8. Professional Benefits
 - a. Salary Increments
 - b. Office Space and Clerical Assistance
 - c. Transportation and Reimbursement
 - d. Continuing Education
9. Length of work year and leave time should be specified.

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APPROVED BY: _____
Minister of Religious Education

Pastor

Chairperson, Parish Committee for Catholic Education

DATE: _____

cc Each of above
Office of Catechetics

GUIDELINES
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARISH
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY~~APPENDIX E, Page 3~~SECTION I
POSITION DESCRIPTION OF A PARISH DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A parish director of religious education is a person who administers (designs, develops, directs and evaluates) the total religious education program of a parish. In a parish where more than one person is employed for this purpose, each person serves as the director of the specific **area(s)** of the programming for which **she/he** is responsible, **e.g.**, director of religious education for youth ministry.

This position description gives a general outline of the possible overall responsibilities of a director of religious education. From this guideline a parish will need to write a specific job description for the director. Each job description will be unique to the parish depending on local factors, **e.g.**, size of staff, scope of programs, and parish size.

The pastor holds the **ultimate** responsibility for catechesis in the parish. Guided by the diocesan Board of Religious Education and working with the parish council, he and his administrative staff set the vision and give direction to the catechetical programming of the parish. The responsibility of the director of religious education is the administration of these religious education programs. The director's educational background and practical experience make it possible to ensure the parish of a total and professional religious education program. Where a parish school exists, the principal is responsible for the administration of the religion program in the school.

A. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To coordinate the total catechetical program of the parish from preschool through adult education.
2. To teach in the adult formation programs of the parish.
3. To create and initiate new or adapted programs, as needed, to meet the religious education needs of the parish.
4. To develop catechetical administrators and delegate proper authority to them, **e.g.**, adult formation, youth ministry, etc.
5. To evaluate annually the total catechetical program and report on it to the parish.
6. To assist **committees** of parish councils to meet their goals and objectives regarding religious education.
7. To keep updated regarding materials, programs and developments in the field of religious education.
8. To maintain the parish religious education office and resource center.

9. To maintain permanent records of each program and its participants.
10. To direct or serve as a resource person for the catechumenate.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PASTOR AND PARISH STAFF

1. To meet regularly with the parish staff for mutual **sharing**, advice and support.
2. To keep staff abreast of current religious education issues.
3. To participate in the annual review of parish programs and to plan job responsibilities for the next year.
4. To assist in setting goals and objectives for the parish.
5. To plan the parish calendar cooperatively with the staff.
6. To assist in budget preparation.
7. To work cooperatively with parish personnel and in the use of facilities.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES TO CATECHISTS

1. To recruit, train, supervise and evaluate catechists.
2. To develop a sense of christian community among catechists.
3. To encourage the spiritual growth of catechists.
4. To require certification of catechists.
5. To provide appropriate staff development.
6. To hold regular staff meetings of the various catechetical programs.
7. To provide catechetical materials for the program.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES TO ADULTS

1. To assess the needs of adult religious education in the parish.
2. To **design** appropriate programming for adult education.
3. To direct or serve as a resource person to the Adult Religious Education Committee.
4. To publicize opportunities for adult enrichment to parishioners.

5. To provide, with the parish administrative staff, parent **preparation** programs for the sacraments.
6. To communicate regularly with parents of CCD and Youth Ministry students through meetings, newsletter or other means.

E. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

1. To administer a quality catechetical program with a defined curriculum for preschool through twelfth grade.
2. To coordinate liturgical and retreat experiences.
3. To provide opportunities for students to render service to the community.
4. To provide community building activities.
5. To incorporate a family perspective in all parish religious education programs.

F. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

1. To meet with the principal and the appropriate school and CCD catechists to coordinate parish sacramental programs and religious education programs.
2. To serve as a resource person to the principal and faculty upon request.

G. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO DIOCESE**

1. To have **knowledge** of and implement diocesan policies and guidelines regarding religious education.
2. To have a current contract, job description and annual goals and objectives on file with the Department of Religious Education.
3. To inform catechists of programs and resources made available by the Department of Religious Education.
4. To attend all diocesan meetings for parish directors of religious education.
5. To participate in diocesan and deanery programming.
6. To complete all diocesan reports on religious education.
7. To suggest policy development to the Board of Religious Education.
8. To suggest program development to the Department of Religious Education.
9. To share one's gifts and talents with the diocesan church through diocesan committees, adult formation classes or other services.

**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
JOB DESCRIPTION**

GENERAL PURPOSE: The Director is responsible for organizing and developing the religious education program for the youth of St. William of York parish.

The Director shall keep in mind that the pastor has the prime responsibility for the spiritual development of the people of the parish, and the Director shall consult with the pastor regarding the progress of the religious education program.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

1. Select (with the pastor's approval) and order textbooks and supplies.
2. Coordinate registration of students and organize classes.
3. Recruit new teachers and aides.
4. Be responsible for teacher training. Train teachers and/or secure other qualified persons to train and/or guide teachers. Discuss classroom discipline and use of audio-visual resources.
5. Arrange for or conduct Teacher In-Service days, i.e., Scriptural Celebrations, Teacher's Days of Reflection, coordinate attendance at annual Diocesan Religious Education Conference.
6. Help teachers in preparing special lessons and celebrations for the liturgical seasons, e.g., Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.
7. Assist teachers to know, understand, and fulfill diocesan teacher certification requirements by communicating various opportunities, courses and experiences that are available for personal and spiritual enrichment.
8. Evaluate the performance of catechists.
9. Coordinate sacrament preparation programs: Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation. Develop retreat programs as they relate to the Religious Education Program.
10. Schedule and facilitate parent meetings in order to assist the parents in preparing their children for the sacraments. Make reception of the sacraments a meaningful, grace-filled experience for the family.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Minister of Religious Education

I. Job Identification

The Minister of Religious Education is a full-time salaried professional member of Our Lady of Angel parish staff. She is accountable to the Pastor. The MRE works on a flexible schedule according to the activities of the day and the seasons of the year. The work averages 40 hours a week with some evening work and periodic weekend work.

II. Job Summary

A. The Minister of Religious Education is responsible for facilitating the process for planning, organizing, guiding and coordinating of all the religious formation process in the parish, from preschool through high school. As a member of the pastoral team the MRE collaborates with the Parish Council in its assessing appropriate needs and setting goals for the entire parish.

B. The major roles and subsequent tasks of the Minister of Religious Education are:

1. Serves as a Member of the Pastoral Staff

a. Shares responsibility with entire staff for their role in developing an appropriate parish vision/philosophy.

b. Acts as a resource person concerning total Parish Religious/Christian Formation by regular attendance, active participation and contribution at staff meetings.

c. Acts as liaison between staff and various committees by reporting, as mutually agreed upon.

d. Supports other staff members by becoming acquainted with the responsibilities and strengths of each, by sharing prayer, and by demonstrating a basic openness and receptivity to them as people.

2. Administrator

a. Facilitates the planning and executing of appropriate means for assessing needs/interests of parishioners on the preschool through high school levels.

b. Researches, designs and implements appropriate programs based on these assessed needs/interests at the respective levels.

c. Facilitates the recruitment, in-service development, and support of leaders, catechists and others involved on each of these levels.

- d. Provides resources, including material or personnel, for specific programs.
 - e. Provides preparation for sacraments such as Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation as needed.
 - f. Facilitates the evaluation of specific programs, their process and contents, including catechists, speakers and curriculum.
 - g. Develops and maintains budget for the parish's Religious Education programs.
3. Educator
- a. Teaches in specific programs.
 - b. Facilitates group process in specific programs, e.g. sacramental programs, catechist's training, etc.
 - c. Acts as consultant to parish organizations, committees, as requested and as time permits.
 - d. Takes responsibility for personal professional development by ongoing reading, study and reflection; participation in professional organizations; participation in appropriate workshops, study days, etc.
 - e. Conducts in-service programs leading to the training of and/or certification of teachers/catechetical personnel.
4. Liaison
- a. Helps provide public relations for all programs by appropriate communication through brochures, bulletins, etc.
 - b. Develops understanding of the goals and objectives of all Christian Formation programs among various parish committees and organizations by making appropriate contacts.
 - c. Provides adequate communications with the Diocesan Office of Catechetics by periodic attendance at enrichment opportunities sponsored the Diocese, attending MRE meetings where the Office of Religious Education (Catechetics) provides input, conveying to the MRE insights coming from the local parish at appropriate times, getting to know the personnel working various areas of the Office of Catechetics.
 - d. Works with the principal and staff of Aquinas Catholic School to provide an atmosphere of Christian learning and love for all who use the parish facilities.

6. Office Management

- a. Keeps appropriate records by developing an adequate system of forms and files.
- b. Provides adequate budget control by regular monitoring of accounts paid and received by the Religious Education Office.
- c. Monitors the purchasing, storage and distribution of educational resources such as books, tapes, filmstrips, records, magazines, newsletters, films, etc.

7. Competencies Required:

planning, organizing; guiding; coordinating; communicating interpersonally, understanding of psychology of learning, growth, and religious development of people; understanding of collegiality; teaching; knowing of available material and personnel resources; evaluating; feeling for imagination and creativity; reflecting theologically on Christian experience; understanding of Christian tradition.

8. Skills Needed:

negotiating; collaborating; assessing need for catechesis of people; goal setting; writing objectives; writing; recruiting; training; researching; program design; facilitating; diagnosing; understanding dynamics of group process; interacting socially; purchasing; understanding of basic math; budgeting; instructing; consulting.

9. Other Requirements:

availability; approachability; commitment to personal and professional growth; responsibility; committed Christian; adequate health.

APPROVED BY:

Minister of Religious Education

Pastor

Date:

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. **General Purpose:** The Minister will be responsible for and serve as Team Leader in developing, organizing and implementing the entire Religious Education Program of Holy Family Parish.
2. **Administration:** Administration rests with the Pastor. It is expected that the Minister will be accountable for carrying out the agreed upon duties.
 - a. The Religious Education Team will consist of the Minister of Religious Education, the Senior High Youth Minister/Minister of Religious Education, the Junior High Youth Minister/Minister of Religious Education and the Minister of Adult Education and Spiritual Enrichment.
 - b. The Minister will participate with the pastoral team in the development of overall ministry to the parish and to assist in the pastoral planning and integration of activities.
3. **Budget:** The Minister, together with the Senior High Minister, the Junior High Minister, the Adult Education Minister and the various committees, will submit a combined budget for the entire religious education, youth ministry and adult education programs at the agreed upon time.
4. **Program Responsibilities:**
 - a. Recruit volunteer catechists and grade level coordinators for religious education for children in pre-school through grade 6.
 - b. Organize programs of formation/education of catechists. This formation/education should lead to Diocesan certification of the catechists.
 - c. Promote regular grade level catechist meetings. Meetings will be run by the grade level coordinator. Minister will act as resource person.
 - d. With coordinators and catechists, plan and implement grade level liturgies/prayer services.
 - e. Implement grade 2 program for preparation of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.
 - f. Implement the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children for sacramental preparation of children older than usual age for Baptism or First Eucharist.

- g. Implement program of preparation for First Reconciliation for children above grade 2.
 - h. Coordinate the activities of the SPRED program for the developmentally delayed.
 - i. Organize and implement additional activities with the assistance of the Senior High Minister, the Junior High Minister and Adult Education Minister, e.g. program registration, catechist appreciation activities, Catechetical Sunday.
 - j. With the Senior High Minister and the Junior High Minister, organize and implement an on-going Christian Sexuality Program according to the guidelines set up by the Diocese.
5. Relationship within the parish:
- a. Pastor - The Pastor has the prime responsibility for the spiritual formation and education of the people of the parish. The Minister shall consult with the Pastor regarding the progress of the Religious Education Program.
 - b. Staff - The Minister will alert the Pastor and staff of needs and issues concerning religious education and will work with other staff members in supporting and carrying out parish policies and programs. Minister is required to attend all scheduled staff meetings and other meetings as feasible in areas of responsibility.
 - c. Religious Education and Formation Committee - The Minister will assist in the recruitment and training of committee members. Programs and policies voted on by the Religious Education and Formation Committee will be carried out under the direction of the Minister and reported to the parish staff. This committee meets quarterly with the Religious Education and Spiritual Enrichment Commission.
 - d. Liturgy Commission - The Minister will coordinate the Religious Education Program with the Liturgy Commission.
6. Assist in the implementation of the decisions of the Diocesan Religious Education Commission.
7. Maintain an understanding of current Catholic theology and interpret it to the Parish Religious Education Committees, catechists, parents and other parish committees as required.
8. Review professional materials and literature in order to keep the Religious Education Committees, catechists and parents informed.
9. Attend and encourage others to attend diocesan meetings, workshops and training programs for catechists and keep the committees informed of such programs.

10. Assist in the selection of texts, audio-visual aids, library references in order to promote an effective parish Religious Education Program.
11. Minister is required to attend Welcoming/Registration Night each month. Minister may arrange for a representative to attend in her place, if she is unable to be there.
12. Religious Education Office: The Minister shall be responsible for
 - a. Coordinating the Religious Education Office staff, secretaries and volunteer help.
 - b. Payment of bills from Religious Education tuition funds.
 - c. Making arrangements for repairs and/or work done at the Religious Education Center with the Maintenance Committee.
 - d. Purchasing and repair of office and class equipment and ordering of supplies.
13. Accountability: The Minister shall be responsible to, the Pastor for the fulfillment of the responsibilities specified above.
14. Evaluation:
 - a. The Minister, with the assistance of the Religious Education and Formation Committee, shall conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program each spring.
 - b. At the Pastor;s request, the Religious Education and Formation Committee shall evaluate the Minister's effectiveness in fulfilling the above responsibilities.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR GRADE LEVEL COORDINATOR

A grade level coordinator is called by God to share his/her faith with conviction, joy, love, enthusiasm and hope; is familiar with Scripture; has good communication skills; has the ability to use various methodologies; has an appreciation for how persons of different ages and circumstances learn; is an experienced teacher (has several years' experience at that grade level).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Team member reporting to MRE.
2. Report to MRE needs of catechists (teaching methods, classroom climate, control, behavior modification, etc.).
3. Encourage catechists, especially new catechists, in becoming certified.
4. Plan lesson schedule for grade level.
5. Prepare letters to parents.
6. Prepare supplemental materials for catechist, i.e., Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost, to be shared in class **and/or** at home.
7. **Supervise** and evaluate catechists in classroom teaching.
8. Assist catechists with planning special sacraments preparations.
9. Assist MRE in developing grade level projects, community sharing, liturgical services and biblical plays.
10. Assist MRE in recruiting and retaining catechists at that grade level.
11. Attend workshops, classes for certification and day of recollection/retreat to advance spiritual growth.
12. List any special grade level event or project on the Calendar, inviting pastor or priests of the parish to attend.
13. Meet with the MRE quarterly for updates or problem solving; feedback results to catechists via phone call or meeting.
14. Suggest to MRE and the pastor potential new coordinators as need arises.
15. Evaluate program; inform MRE of any changes needed for following year.
16. Above all, teach catechists in a creative way how to develop and share with children the capacity for spontaneous prayer and quiet time; how to promote emotional development (self-acceptance, trust, friendship, etc.).

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR A CATECHIST (GENERIC)

A catechist is one called by God to share his/her faith with conviction, joy, love enthusiasm and hope.

MISSION: To proclaim Christ's message and help students apply it to their lives. To foster community, prayer, worship and the desire to serve among those we teach.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Preparation
 - Spend sufficient amount of time each week preparing for class.
 - * Arrive 15 minutes before class.
 - * Prepare a class environment conducive to learning.
2. Conducting the Session:
 - Hold 30 one-hour sessions (or equivalent) per year to fulfill diocesan requirements.
 - * Make effective use of the resources available (priests, MRE, Grade Level Coordinator, A-V materials, records, books, resource file, supply/craft closets, xerox materials, etc. one week in advance of class).
3. Contact parents of students in cases of prolonged absence or discipline problems. Refer to coordinator for guidance and support.
4. Prepare and attend your class celebration (i.e., Mass, communal Reconciliation, Passover–Seder Meal, etc.).
5. Keep a record of attendance, to be turned in to the parish Religious Education Office at the end of the school year.
6. Help the Grade Level Coordinator and MRE evaluate the program in the spring.
7. Help the MRE to administer the ACRE evaluation tests: Level I - 5th grade; Level II - 8th grade; Level III - 11th and 12th grades.
8. Evaluate yourself after each session, noting changes needed.
9. Be responsible for classroom, equipment used at the time of classes.

FORMATION/TRAINING:

1. Attend orientation for new and returning teachers.
2. Attend the commissioning service on Catechetical Sunday.
3. Attend All Saints Training sessions by the Pastor whenever possible.
4. Participate in grade level meetings with the coordinator.
5. Work toward diocesan catechist certification; participate in at least one conference, workshop, course, etc., in Scripture, theology, methodology each year (i.e., Diocesan Catechetical Conference, All Saints sessions).

ST. TIMOTHY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Job Description for a Catechist

A catechist is one called by God to share his/her faith with conviction, joy, love, enthusiasm and hope.

Mission

- * To proclaim Christ's message and help students apply it to their lives.
- * To foster community, prayer, worship and the desire to serve among those we teach.

Spiritual Growth

1. Nourish your own personal growth in faith through prayer and reading of scripture.
2. Participate in a retreat or day of reflection during the year.

Catechetical Responsibility

1. Preparation
 - * Spend a sufficient amount of time each week preparing for your class (Suggested: 2 hours)
 - * Prepare the environment ahead of time.
 - * If you are teaching in the school, arrive 15 minutes before class.
2. Conducting the session
 - * Hold 30 one-hour sessions per year to fulfill diocesan requirements.
 - * Make effective use of the resources available (priests, MREs, Lead Catechists, Audio-Visuals, records, books, resource file, supply/craft closet).
3. Contact parents of students in cases of prolonged absence or discipline problems. Refer to your Lead Catechist for guidance and support.
4. Prepare and attend your class celebrations (i.e., Mass, Communal Reconciliation, Seder Supper (6th), Christmas Pageant (1st).
5. Complete student evaluations twice yearly (mid-term and end of year).
6. Keep a record of attendance to be turned in to the R.E. office at the end of the year.
7. Help the Lead Catechists and the MRE evaluate the program in the spring.

Formation/Training:

1. Attend commissioning service on Catechetical weekend (Saturday, 5:30 mass, Sept. 19, 1987).
2. Attend St. Timothy Catechist Training Workshop in October
3. Participate in grade level meetings (4-5 per year).
4. Work toward diocesan catechist certification. Participate in a minimum of one conference, workshop, course, etc. in Scripture/Theology/Methodology each year. (Ex: Diocesan Conference for Religious Education, held on a Saturday in November).

POLICY AND GUIDELINE REVISION SUGGESTION FORM

NAME _____

PARISH _____

DATE _____

POLICY OR GUIDELINE NUMBER _____

CONCERN:

SUGGESTED CHANGE(S):

Please return this sheet to:

Office of Catechetics
Catholic Diocese of Arlington
200 N. Glebe Rd., #703
Arlington, VA 22203