

# HOME BASED CATECHESIS

## OFFERING PARENTS OPTIONS TO TRADITIONAL CATECHETICAL MODELS

### PROVIDING OPTIONS FOR PARENTS WANTING TO HOME BASED CATECHIZE

“As primary educators of their children, parents have the right and duty to choose the kind of educational environment that they determine best suits their children’s educational needs. Therefore, home schooling is a viable option for the general education of children. (NDC # 61).

In light of this caveat, it is suggested that the Parish Catechetical Leader have policies in place regarding the home based catechetical formation for continuing or sacrament preparation.

The NDC suggests that there should be a cooperative effort between children, parents, parish catechetical leadership, pastor and diocesan bishop in organizing a program for home based catechesis.

### Home based catechesis should be authentic and complete which implies:

Having USCCB approved books that are rooted in the pillars of the church.

Involvement in the community life and mission of the Church: Sunday Eucharist, charitable works and involvement in the life of the local parish.

### Sacrament preparation home based catechesis includes:

- candidate involvement in non-instructional preparatory activities with their peer group which allows the student to develop a sense of faith community;
- additional parent pre-preparation support classes for child’s sacrament formation; constant guidance and communication with the director (PCL) or the pastor.

### Some suggestions for PCLs in case parents may opt to provide home catechesis which has the collaborative approval of PCL, pastor and catechetical board:

- Provide parents with a parish catechetical plan that identifies goals and objectives; and approved USCCB books and materials. Lesson plans, yearly calendar; syllabus, schedule of parent meetings and non-instructional preparatory activities like prayer services should also be provided. Parents should be open to meeting with PCL for periodic curriculum guidance and any other formation details. **It is recommended that clear policies and procedures by the parish be given to parents in writing.**
- Recommend that parents attend Eucharist with child. (“Through the Eucharist, the people of God come to know the Paschal Mystery ever more intimately and experientially.” NDC no.33)
- List all required expectations for candidates preparing for sacrament including required documentation, baptismal certificate, prayers to be learned and parish catechetical plan.
- Emphasize to parents the need for authentic and complete catechesis which suggests that a coordinator will provide guidance to parent catechists.
- Inform parents of additional required training like diocesan workshops, IRPS, university of Dayton Virtual Learning Program and *Echoes of Faith* workshops.
- List additional parish life opportunities for children and parents: charitable works, community building activities like parish carnival, prayer services like

- Station of the Cross, Lenten Mission, Prayer services, service to the sick and elderly.
- Parents should also comply and be trained in Safe Environment Policies and *Virtus* training for children.
- The home-based catechesis model is offered as an alternative model for those families who cannot participate in the primary parish formation program. The number of participants is important to the integrity and effectiveness of the model
- In this model of faith formation, the parent or other adult family member commits to be the catechist to their child(ren), prepare and teach their child(ren) a weekly lesson following the approved diocesan standards in the curriculum and the scope and sequence from an approved doctrinally-based text.
- The church commits to providing the parent all the resources necessary to present a comprehensive, systematic, age appropriate process of faith formation. This include a program facilitator, child texts, catechist teaching manual and the orientation and training needed to be an effective catechist to their child(ren). This also includes safe environment training.
- The home-based catechesis model includes opportunities for all the families to gather and participate in prayer, learning and services experiences that build community and serve to encourage and sustain them in their efforts.\*
- The home-based catechesis model includes means to communicate and provide accountability to the facilitator.

### **Code of Canon Law Regarding Home Based Catechesis**

- **It is the responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop to:**
- **issue norms concerning catechetical matters**
- **Make provisions that suitable instruments for catechesis are available. (Canon 775 §1)**
- **Pastors have the responsibility for**
- **All catechesis so that the faith becomes “living, manifest and active and productive through formation in doctrine and the experience of Christian living. (Canon 773)**
- **And for ensuring that adequate catechetical preparation within an adequate period of time is provided for those seeking to complete initiation. ( Canon 777)**
- **Ensuring that sacramental preparation be done through proper evangelization and catechetical instruction. (Canon 843 §2)**

**The Office of Catechetical Services recommends that all parishes (pastor, PCL and catechetical board) establish local policies concerning choice of materials to be used, required catechetical training for instructor, fees and any other required expectations for those families opting to use this model of faith formation.**