

# *Religious Education*

## *Policies*

*Department of Educational Services  
Archdiocese of Cincinnati*

*Policies promulgated through January, 2004*

## **CATECHETICAL PERSONNEL**

*Upon receiving persons through the waters of baptism, the Church pledges to help them to deepen their faith commitment through a greater understanding and knowledge of the person of Christ, as well as the implications of the Gospel for their lives. This Catholic formation, education and instruction is a lifelong process, one which should be directed by qualified personnel.*

### **2000.00     CATECHETICAL LEADER**

#### **2000.01     PARISH AND SCHOOL**

Each parish and school must have a designated catechetical leader.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2000.02     HIRING A CATECHETICAL LEADER**

Parishes seeking to hire a catechetical leader to administer their religious education programs should consult with the Office of Religious Education.

*(see Ministry of the Catechetical Leader)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2000.03     SALARY**

Parishes should use the Office of Religious Education's published salary ranges for catechetical leaders in order to determine an appropriate and fair salary.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2000.04     CATECHETICAL LEADER CERTIFICATION**

All who administer parish or private elementary school catechetical programs, whether full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, should follow the archdiocesan "Qualifications for Certification."

*(see The Ministry of the Catechetical Leader)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2000.05     PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

The pastor should regularly conduct an appraisal of the performance of the catechetical leader.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2000.06      DISMISSAL

Pastors seeking to dismiss a catechetical leader are to follow archdiocesan guidelines.

*(see Personnel Policy Guidelines for Parishes)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2001.00      CATECHIST**

2001.01      CHURCH STATUS

Teachers of religion, by nature of their designation, are to be people who practice their faith and are in full communion with the Catholic Church.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2001.02      CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

All teachers employed by the Catholic schools are to have a basic understanding of and respect for the teachings of the Catholic tradition and the role of the school in the students' formation.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2001.03      CATECHIST CERTIFICATION

Teachers of religion, whether full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, in parish religious education programs, Catholic elementary schools or the RCIA are to comply with the "Process of Becoming Certified As a Catechist."

*(see Ministry of the Catechist)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2001.04      OCSAA ACCREDITATION

To meet the requirements of the Ohio Catholic School Accreditation Association in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Catholic elementary school teachers who are teaching religion must hold a current (unexpired) certificate of the Basic, General or Advanced type. *Teachers of religion who have achieved Basic Catechist Certification must continue to work toward Advanced Catechist Certification.*

*(see Ministry of the Catechist)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2002.00      CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION PERSONNEL**

2002.01      DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

Each Catholic high school must have a designated certified religion department chairperson.

(see *Guidelines for Catholic High School Teacher Certification*)

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2002.02      HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION TEACHER CERTIFICATION

All who teach religion in a Catholic high school must meet the certification requirements of the archdiocese or must achieve certification within four years of beginning to teach religion.

(see *Guidelines for High School Religion Teacher Certification*)

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2002.03      TEACHERS PURSUING CERTIFICATION

All who teach religion in catholic high school, who are not yet certified, must earn a minimum of three college semester hours (4.5quarter hrs.) annually until they achieve certification.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2003.00      STAFF SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT**

2003.01      ANNUAL IN-SERVICE

Each Catholic school and parish religious education program shall include in its plan an annual in-service devoted to the spiritual enrichment of the staff.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2004.00      AIDS/HIV**

2004.01      RESPONSIBILITY

All parish personnel involved in religious education are to have an understanding of and are to follow the Guidelines and Procedures regarding AIDS/HIV infection.

(see *Catholic Schools Administrator's Guide, Section VIII, pp.15-18*)

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2005.00**      **CHILD PROTECTION**

2005.01      RECOGNIZING AND REPORTING ABUSE

All persons who have regular, significant relationships with children must comply with the policies, procedures and recommendations of the archdiocese as found in the *Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection*.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMMING**

*Quality catechetical programs are built on god policies that promote outcomes derived from the real needs of students, families and the Catholic community. The approach should always reflect standards in keeping with the Church's Catechetical Mission.*

### **2100.00     CATECHETICAL ORGANIZATION**

#### **2100.01     VISION/MISSION**

The religious education program should have a written mission statement consistent with the parish vision.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2100.02     EDUCATION COMMISSIONS**

Each parish must have an Education Commission that is responsible for the lifelong faith formation needs of the parish.

*(see Parish Education Commission Handbook)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2100.03     PARISH**

Each parish should provide a formal religious education program for its members from early childhood through adulthood.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2100.04     SCHOOL**

Each Catholic school must provide a formal religious education program for all its students.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2100.05     ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS**

Adolescent catechesis must be a component of a total youth ministry approach.

*(see Growing Together: Adolescent Religious Education)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2100.06 PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOKS

All parishes must develop religious education handbooks for staff, and for parents and students.

(see *Considerations When Writing Parish Religious Education Handbooks*)

APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98

**2101.00 CURRICULUM**

2101.01 GUIDELINES

All catechetical efforts in the archdiocese must comply with the archdiocesan curriculum guidelines.

(see *Growing Together: Ministry to Children* (3 years old-eighth grade) and/or *Growing Together: Adolescent Religious Education* [ages 12-19])

APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98

2101.02 RELIGION TEXTBOOK/PROGRAM SERIES

All textbook and audio visual program series used in children's religious education programs should be chosen from the *Preferred Religion Textbook/Program* list.

APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98

2101.03 RESPECT LIFE PROGRAMS

All catechetical efforts should incorporate a respect life component that includes the Catholic perspective on sexuality.

(see *Preferred Religion Textbook/Program List*)

APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98

2101.04 CHRISTIAN SERVICE

All catechetical efforts should encourage and provide various opportunities for children and youth to serve others.

APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98

2101.05 SOCIAL ISSUES

All catechetical efforts should include opportunities to discuss and act upon the many social issues confronting the world today.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2102.00 PARTICIPATION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

2102.01 CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Every child/youth must participate in the school's formal Catholic religious education program.

*(see Catholic Schools Administrator's Guide: Section IV)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2102.02 PARISHES

Every child/youth should participate in some form of religious education recognized/approved by the parish.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2102.03 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with disabilities should be provided opportunities to participate in school and/or parish religious education programs to the fullest extent appropriate.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2103.00 TIME ALLOTMENTS**

2103.01 PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Classes in parish religious education programs (early childhood, elementary, high school) are to meet a minimum of 30 clock hours per year.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2103.02 CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The minimum time allotments for instruction in the Catholic faith are to be strictly followed. (No more than one-fifth of all classroom religion time may be used for a Mass, Penance service, or a like celebration.)

(see *Catholic Schools Administrator's Guide: Section IV*, pp. 13 & 14)

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2103.03 CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

For religion courses, 120 clock hours of classroom instruction per year (one Carnegie unit) are required. Students must take part in a religion class each semester.

*APPROVED by ACOE:10/27/03*

**2104.00 RESOURCES**

2104.01 PROPER AUTHORIZATION FOR RESOURCE PERSONS

Persons coming into the school or parish religious education program as a promoter, participant, leader or director of student activities must be authorized by the appropriate administrator.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2104.02 FACILITIES AND MATERIALS

Adequate materials and facilities should be available to all those who staff and participate in religious education programs.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2104.03 BUDGETING

Each parish must allocate an adequate portion of the parish financial resources to provide quality faith formation programs.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2105.00     LITURGY AND PRAYER SERVICES**

2105.01     STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Children and youth should have opportunities to prepare and participate in liturgies and prayer services as integral parts of their religious formation.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2105.02     OPENING AND CLOSING CELEBRATIONS

Each academic year should open and close with a liturgy or prayer celebration.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2105.03     HOLY DAYS

Children and youth should be adequately prepared to participate in the celebration of Holy Days.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2105.04     PARTICIPATION IN THE LITURGY

Children and youth who are not Catholic may participate in the Eucharistic Liturgy as members of the assembly, ushers, greeters, musicians or in the presentation of gifts, etc., but not as Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers or Servers. Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1969, Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts. #1010, Chapter One: General Principles, Section 8: Ecumenism.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2106.00     FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

2106.01     PARENT/GUARDIAN

All parish and school religious education programs should provide opportunities for parents/guardians to become acquainted with and involved in the religion program.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2106.02 HOME-BASED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Families who choose home-based religious education should follow the archdiocesan guidelines for catechesis and sacrament preparation.

*(see Guidelines for Home-Based Religious Education)*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2106.03 RESPONDING TO FAMILY SITUATIONS

When developing religious education programs, the varied situations of families should be taken into account.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2106.04 FAMILY ROLE IN FAITH FORMATION

Parishes and Catholic schools should provide opportunities for parents to understand and assume their role in the faith formation of their children.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2106.05 PARENT CONFERENCE

Catholic schools and parish programs should provide opportunities for parents to meet with catechists and exchange information pertinent to the student's progress in religious education.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2107.00 SACRAMENTS**

2107.01 PREPARATION

Every parish should evangelize and provide catechetical instruction for those preparing for reception of the sacraments.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2107.02 GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION

All preparation for the reception of sacraments should follow the archdiocesan guidelines.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2107.03 PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN PREPARING FOR SACRAMENTS

Every sacrament preparation program should provide assistance to parents/guardians in assuming their responsibility to prepare their children for celebrating the sacraments.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2107.04 STUDENTS SEEKING ENTRANCE INTO THE CHURCH

When children of catechetical age are unbaptized, or are baptized in another denomination, catechists should follow the process for sacramental preparation found in *RCIA, National Statutes # 18, 19, 30, and 31.*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2107.05 BAPTIZED BUT UNCATECHIZED CATHOLIC CHILDREN

In cases of children of catechetical age, baptized Catholic, but uncatechized, catechists should follow the process for sacramental preparation found in *RCIA, National Statutes #18, 19, 30, and 31.*

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2107.06 FIRST CELEBRATIONS OF SACRAMENTS

First celebration of the sacraments should take place within the child's or youth's parish community.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2108.00 EVALUATION**

2108.01 FORMAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

All parishes and schools should formally evaluate their total religious education program at least once every five years.

*APPROVED by ACOE: 1/13/03*

2108.02 NCEA ACRE INVENTORIES

The NCEA ACRE Assessment must be administered in every parish and school annually.

*APPROVED by ACOE: 1/13/03*

2108.03      REPORTS TO PARENTS

A written report of a student's progress in religious education should be made to parents at regular intervals and a copy of such reports should be kept on file.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2108.04      RECORD OF STUDENT PROGRESS

A Progress Report in religion should reflect the growth of the student in his/her ability to understand and to express the teachings of the Catholic Church.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

## **ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

“For a generation the Church has insisted that adult faith formation is the “chief form of catechesis” (Sharing the Light of Faith, the National Catechetical Directory) and is, in fact, the ‘central task in the catechetical enterprise” (Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community). The catechesis of adults empowers them to make a conscious, firm and free decision for the Gospel. Adult catechesis leads to conversion to the Lord, active membership in the Christian Community, and Christian discipleship in the world (Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community).

### **2200.00 ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

#### 2200.01 IMPORTANCE

The faith formation of adults must be considered the chief form of catechesis. All the other forms must be in some way oriented to it.

(see *General Directory for Catechesis*, #59, 258-275)

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### 2200.02 PROGRAMMING

Each parish should provide faith formation opportunities for all adults.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

### **2201.00 LEADERSHIP**

#### 2201.01 STRUCTURE

Each parish should have a designated catechetical leader and an adult faith formation team responsible for the faith formation needs of adults.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

### **2202.00 RESOURCES**

#### 2202.01 BUDGETING

Each parish must allocate adequate funds to meet the faith formation needs of adults.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

2202.02 FACILITIES

Each parish should provide adequate facilities to meet the faith formation needs of adults.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

**2203.00 ASSESSMENT**

2203.01 PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Appropriate instruments are to be used to assess the needs of adults as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the parish adult faith formation efforts.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

## **PROGRAMS AND STRUCTURES**

*Circumstances may arise that render traditional religious education programs no longer effective. When this happens and new structures are developed, the one thing that remains constant is the need to share the Good News with others so that faith becomes living, conscious and active.*

### **2300.00      CHANGING APPROACHES**

#### **2300.01      RESTRUCTURING PARISH CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS**

Any plan to formally consolidate or restructure parish religious education programs should be developed in consultation with the Regional Director of Religious Education and submitted to the Area Commission on Education.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*

#### **2300.02      NEW APPROACHES**

Parishes seeking to adopt new approaches to religious education must present their plan to their respective Area Commission on Education.

*APPROVED by ACOE:3/9/98*