

GUIDELINES FOR  
PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
AND CATECHIST ORIENTATION



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA  
OFFICE FOR CATECHETICAL FORMATION

Revised 2016



## *Prayer for Catechists*

*Heavenly Father,  
in your goodness bless all catechists  
of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.*

*Send your Spirit upon them  
to be living witnesses  
to Your message of love  
and salvation.*

*Deepen their understanding  
of Your Holy Word  
so they may faithfully teach  
the truth revealed  
by your son, Jesus Christ.*

*Strengthen their resolve  
to be true sons and daughters  
of Your holy Catholic Church.*

*We ask this in the name  
of Jesus, the Master teacher.  
Amen.*



Dear Catechist,

Congratulations! You have responded to a call to participate in the Church's catechetical mission. Your vocation is truly a blessed one. In collaboration with your pastor, you introduce real people to the real person of Jesus. As a result, they come to know Jesus better and find themselves transformed by Him.

The Second Vatican Council ushered in a new era for catechesis. The Council taught of the necessity of presenting Catholic doctrine in a manner suited to the needs of the time. Further, the Council decreed that a directory for the catechetical instruction of the Christian people should be created. In the years following the Council, a number of bold initiatives gave evidence of a renewal in catechesis. Pope Paul VI hosted the First International Catechetical Congress, established the International Council for Catechesis and issued Evangelii Nuntiandi, an Apostolic Exhortation which promoted the revival of evangelization and catechesis. Pope John Paul II continued the catechetical resurgence. He issued Catechesi Tradendae, an encyclical that fostered the Church's catechetical mission. Later, he approved the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the first universal catechism in more than 400 years. More recently, Pope Benedict approved three valuable catechetical tools: The National Directory for Catechesis, a Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults. We live in a privileged moment of catechesis.

While all members of the Church participate in the Church's catechetical mission, you have been called to a more specific role. You guide the believer to a more mature faith in Jesus, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him. Through catechesis, others grow in a personal relationship with God, participate in the sacraments, develop a mature conscience and integrate faith in all areas of their lives.

In order to be effective in this important ministry, there is the need for systematic training. The "Catechist Orientation Course" is one of many opportunities that are provided for your personal, spiritual and professional development. It is designed to help you acquire the knowledge and skills that you need to hand on the faith to those entrusted to your care. I know that you will find the information interesting and the materials beneficial.

Thank you for being a catechist. The Church is always in need of those who sacrifice for the good of others. May your own relationship with Jesus deepen as you engage in this exciting ministry.

God Bless,

Ann M. Menna  
Deputy Secretary  
Office for Catechetical Formation

January 2016

January 2016

Dear Colleagues,

In March of 2008, the Office for Catechetical Formation gathered a group of Directors of Religious Education who were actively involved in orienting new catechists to the catechetical ministry through regional workshops. The group's task was to discuss the future of catechetical orientation, its standardization and accessibility to all new catechists.

As these Directors of Religious Education shared their experiences and insights it became apparent that a totally new approach was warranted. It was also decided that commercial products were too universal and not specific to the guidelines and policies of the Archdiocese. Additionally, the busy lives and responsibilities of catechists and Directors of Religious Education were recognized and became driving forces which called for a new approach for this orientation. After two years of meetings, email exchanges, and revisions, the Catechist Orientation Course binder became a reality in the Spring of 2012.

Recently, a select committee reviewed the binder in preparation for the Winter Professional Day Presentation on Catechist Formation (January 29, 2016). The following pages are the result of revisions and addition to the original "blue binder" content. The 2016 revision still enables Directors/Coordinators of Religious Education to provide "in house" instruction at the local parish within a manageable time frame. The course binder structure is specifically designed to allow for future revisions and/or additional materials. A table of contents directs you to six major divisions which include website addresses and/or references to an appendix for more information and printable resources. An official course record form can be found as the last Appendix. Use this form as an active checklist to track the catechist's progress during the duration of the orientation course. Upon completion, send the signed form to the Office for Catechetical Formation.

Personally, since the implementation of this Catechist Orientation Course in my own parish a few unexpected bonuses occurred. I found myself turning to the binder to refine our Catechist Handbook, to update parish policies to meet Archdiocesan guidelines, to structure the content of ongoing formational meetings for all our catechists, and to evaluate areas that simply need 'refreshing'.

It is my prayer that this catechetical tool blesses your ministry in a like manner.

Roberta Ortwein  
Chairperson, Catechist Orientation Committee  
Director of Religious Education  
St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Ambler

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# The Catechetical Ministry



“GO AND TEACH ALL NATIONS”<sup>\*</sup>  
THE CHURCH’S MISSION OF EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS

All baptized Catholics share in the Church’s mission of evangelization. Through personal witness to Christ’s saving message of faith, hope and love, they faithfully proclaim the word of God and the presence and actions of the Holy Spirit in the world and in the Church.

WHAT IS CATECHESIS?

Catechesis is sharing the teachings of Jesus Christ in such a way that a person comes to know about and believes in God, enters a relationship with God and is transformed by him. The definitive aim of catechesis, then, is to put people not only in touch but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ through word and sacrament.

Thus, catechesis:

- centers on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, the Son of God
- presents the doctrines of the Catholic faith in an attractive and systematic fashion
- strives to make disciples of Jesus Christ through the reception of the sacraments of initiation
- invites believers to ongoing faith formation
- includes liturgical, communal and personal prayer experiences
- recognizes the influences of family, culture and society

The General Directory for Catechesis and the National Directory for Catechesis identify six tasks of catechesis which promote:

- Task 1: knowledge of the faith through revelation of Jesus Christ in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition
- Task 2: knowledge of the Liturgy and the sacraments
- Task 3: understanding of moral formation in the life of Christ
- Task 4: the teaching of prayer in communion with Jesus Christ
- Task 5: active participation in the Body of Christ and the mission of the Church
- Task 6: missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in the world.

CALLED TO BE A CATECHIST

The ministry of catechist is a vocation, an interior call of the Holy Spirit. It springs from the Sacrament of Baptism and is strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. Commissioned by the Church, catechists participate in a divine calling to teach as Jesus did. Catechists need to be practicing Catholics who participate fully in the communal worship and life of the Church. They are prepared by the Church for their apostolate through appropriate catechetical training.

WHO IS A CATECHIST?

The Church has identified specific catechetical roles. Bishops are primarily teachers of the faith and are responsible for catechetical activity of his diocese. Priests share in the teaching role of the bishop and are his immediate collaborators. Catechists assist bishops and priests in the catechetical mission.

Catechists include: deacons, catechetical leaders, catechists of the parish religious education program and Catholic school, youth ministers and campus ministers. Parents/guardians are the first teachers of the faith. When a child reaches catechetical age, catechists assist them in their role. Therefore, the spiritual life of a catechist should be characterized by:

- love of God and the Catholic Church
- faithful practice of the Catholic faith
- personal prayer and dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church
- missionary zeal by which they are fully convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith
- enthusiastic proclamation of the faith
- active participation in their local parish community
- faithful attendance at Sunday Eucharist
- devotion to Mary, the first disciple and model of catechists
- devotion to the Most Holy Eucharist, the source of nourishment for catechists.

To help the catechist gain a fuller understanding of the catechetical ministry, the Director of Religious Education is to review the following appendices with him/her:

- Appendix 1, Qualifications and Responsibilities for a Parish Religious Education Catechist which is to be signed and dated by the Director of Religious Education.
- Appendix 2, Sample Catechist Information Form
- Appendix 3, Sample Catechist Evaluation Form.

#### CATECHIST FORMATION

In order to present the Catholic faith in a full and attractive way, those who catechize need ongoing faith formation. Through intellectual, spiritual, pastoral and human formation, the catechist develops a personal knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Such formation promotes:

- the study of scripture and theology
- a familiarity with catechetical resources and teaching methodologies
- unity with pastors and the Church where all authentic religious education occurs.

#### CATECHIST CERTIFICATION

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catechetical Certification Policy presents the requirements for certification as a parish catechist. Through core and elective courses, catechists become familiar with the basic content and dimensions of the Catholic faith. The Director of Religious Education is to review the Catechetical Certification Policy with catechists which is posted at: [www.phillyocf.org](http://www.phillyocf.org)

-Catholic Elementary School Teachers may earn one (1) elective credit annually for service as the lead catechist in a Religious Education Program. See Appendix 4.

-Catechists who are not Catholic School Teachers will be credited with five (5) elective credits upon the completion of their 5th year of teaching and then on an annual basis. See Appendix 5.

***\*NOTE TO THE DIRECTOR:***

*The Catechetical Ministry section should be reviewed annually with all catechists.*

# The Classroom



## INTRODUCTION

To teach the faith effectively to children, catechists must be persons of prayer who communicate the beliefs of the Church through a systematic and thoughtful approach. In order to accomplish this goal, they must be aware of basic educational policies, concepts, and strategies.

### RELIGION GUIDELINES FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides Religion Guidelines from Early Childhood to Level 12. These guidelines present the truths of the Catholic faith in an age appropriate and systematic manner.

The Scope and Sequence Charts for the Parish Religious Education Program (Levels 1-6) present an organized schedule for the teaching of the core or essential curriculum over one academic year. The Guidelines and Scope and Sequence Charts can be found at: <http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>

## TEXTBOOKS

Parish Religious Education Programs of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia may only use the religion series and sacramental textbooks which are approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB list includes only those texts which are in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Director of Religious Education in consultation with the pastor selects these textbooks from this list.

### BASIC VOCABULARY FOR CATECHISTS

Catechists may be unfamiliar with words, terms, and acronyms used in Church documents, religion textbooks and catechist manuals. Appendix 6 is a list of basic vocabulary to assist the catechist.

## PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN

Basic prayers which reflect the teachings and language of the Catholic faith are part of the religious education curriculum. Appendix 7 is a synopsis of these prayers and is to be reviewed by the catechist. For a tri-fold format, go to: <http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>

## LESSON PLANS

Planning and preparation are key factors for good classroom organization and management. An effective lesson plan communicates the objective of the instruction and outlines the teaching strategies and learning activities which lead to this outcome.

The Director of Religious Education assists the catechist in the task of lesson planning by:

- reviewing the section on lesson plans in the catechist manual
- assigning a mentor to assist in the writings of lesson plans
- providing sample lesson plans or web resources.

Refer to Appendix 8 for a sample lesson plan.

## LEARNING STYLES OF CHILDREN

Children learn in many different ways. Needs vary and creative approaches help children to learn effectively. The catechist should review the section on this topic in the teacher manual.

## ACCESS AND INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Catechesis, according to the General Directory of Catechesis, is one of the most important ecclesial activities. The catechetical program must reflect the broader meaning of the mission of the Church. In accord with Canon 777, all the baptized, because they are called by God to maturity of faith, have the right to adequate catechesis. It is the responsibility of the Church community to respond in a fitting and satisfactory manner. This vision prompted the United States Catholic Bishops to write a “Pastoral Statement on People with Disabilities” and the “Guidelines for Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities”. Both documents state that catechetical and sacramental programs need to be inclusive of parishioners with disabilities. As far as possible, individuals with disabilities should be integrated in the ordinary catechetical activities of the parish community.

The Director of Religious Education, therefore, invites, welcomes and makes accommodations for the religious education and faith formation of parish children with physical, sensory, mental and behavioral disabilities who do not attend the Catholic elementary school. In order to provide for their full inclusion, the Parish Director of Religious Education and catechists need to seek out and utilize the resources of families, parishioners and diocesan personal to support the religious education of children with special needs.

To assist the Parish Religious Education Programs, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides:

- a model of Access and Inclusion for the Parish Religious Education Program (Appendix 9) which is to be reviewed by the catechist
- a sample registration form designed to identify children with medical conditions and/or who are in need of learning support (Appendix 10)
- resources on inclusion, accommodations and modifications which can be found at:  
<http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Matters of a confidential nature are often disclosed to a catechist for the purpose and only for the purpose of his/her work in the parish religious education program. This information may not be disclosed beyond the purpose of his/her work in the parish religious education program.

It is very important for catechists to be informed of medical conditions, individual education plans and/or custody arrangements. This information should be captured on the annual registration form. In matters of custody, it is incumbent upon the Director to obtain the most recent legal custody agreement. See Appendix 10 for a sample registration form which captures this information.

## CATECHIST WHO TRANSPORT STUDENTS TO AND FROM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A parent/guardian (s) who permits a catechist to transport his/her child(ren) to and/or from the parish religious education program must complete a permission and release form. The catechist must also sign this form. Refer to Appendix 11 for a sample form.

## TRIP PERMISSION AND RELEASE FORM

No student is permitted to participate in any trip sponsored by the Parish Religious Education Program without a completed, signed and returned trip permission and release form. For a sample trip permission and release form, refer to Appendix 12.

## ACT 175 RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The concept of “released time” is based on the constitutional right of parents of children enrolled in a public school to direct the religious education of their children. In Pennsylvania, the child may be released for such religious instruction no more than thirty six hours per school year. Upon the written request of a parent, the superintendent of the school district shall excuse the parent's child in order to attend religious instruction (section 15-1546). The parent's request must identify and describe the religious instruction and the dates and hours for which the absence is requested. Following each absence, the parent/guardian must also furnish in writing to the district school superintendent attesting to the fact that the child did indeed attend the religious instruction that day.

Often Parish Religious Education Programs use released time for religious education instruction, activities or trips. The Director of Religious Education oversees this process.

Refer to Appendix 13 for a step by step procedure regarding Act 175 as it pertains to the Parish Religious Education Program. For a sample letter for released time, refer to Appendix 14.

## ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Religious Education Programs are required to take attendance for each session. Catechists should take attendance in a timely manner and submit to the Director according to parish policy. The Director should keep a cumulative electronic or hard copy annual record of attendance. These records should be retained up to the completion of the student's ninth (9th) grade unless he/she has transferred to another parish program.

## HOME-BASED CATECHESIS

Home-based Catechesis is permitted by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, however, the parish sets the local policy. For guidelines for home-based catechesis guidelines, see Appendix 15.



# Safety Policies and Plans



## SAFETY

The Parish Religious Education Programs of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are committed to the safety and well being of their students. Safety policies and plans help to ensure this protection. These policies and plans must be approved by the pastor, implemented by the Director of Religious Education, and always include considerations for students with special needs. The Director of Religious Education is to review these policies and plans with the catechist.

**Contact 911 immediately** if a serious emergency or threatening behavior by a student or an adult occurs on campus.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

During the religious education session, the Director of Religious Education must have easy access to the contact information for: Police, Fire, Ambulance, Poison Control and Toxic Chemical Spill centers. The Director of Religious Education is encouraged to carry a cell phone at all times and include these numbers in his/her contact list.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Director of Religious Education is encouraged to send an annual calendar to the police and fire departments which includes the dates, times and location (s) of the religious education program. This information assists these agencies in the case of an emergency.

## INCIDENT REPORT

In the case of an accident, unusual event, injury and/or illness, an incident report is completed and kept on file as a record for the calendar year. The Director of Religious Education, a catechist, a witness, or a staff person completes this report. For a sample incident report, see to Appendix 16.

## MASTER AND CLASS LISTS OF STUDENTS

In the case of an emergency and/or evacuation of the building:

- the Director of Religious Education must have easy access to a master list of all classes with student's names, home and emergency phone number and attendance lists
- the catechist must have easy access to a class attendance list and a list of student's names with home and emergency phone numbers.

## EVACUATION OF BUILDING DUE TO AN EMERGENCY

It is a proven statistic that emergency evacuation plans save lives. Catechists must become familiar with and practice classroom evacuation route(s). These plans should include an outside location/destination and if necessary, another location for supervised parent/guardian pick up.

In the case of an evacuation of the building for an emergency or fire drills:

- the Director of Religious Education carries out a master list of all classes with student's names, home and emergency phone number
- the catechist carries out a class list with student's names, home and emergency phone number and session attendance report if separate from the class list.

## FIRE DRILLS

Parish Religious Education Programs are required to conduct at least one fire drill annually. The Director of Religious Education should notify the local fire department of this date. Often local fire companies will lend assistance with this safety exercise.

The catechist must become familiar with the following:

- evacuation routes for class
- location/activation system of fire alarms in the building
- procedure for contacting the fire department in the case of a real emergency.

## FIRST AID AND UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

First aid refers to the initial and reasonable care given in response to an illness, accident or injury.

Universal precautions refers to the avoidance of contact with another's bodily fluids.

Refer to Appendix 17 for more detailed information.

## LOCK DOWN AND LOCK OUT PLANS AND PROCEDURES

**“Lockdown”** procedures are used to protect building occupants from potential dangers in the building (e.g. student threat or an intruder) or external threats that may enter the building.

A “Lock Down with Warning” occurs when there is a threat or danger outside the building (e.g., fugitive on the run and in area; a medical emergency outside the building)

A “Lock Down with Intruder” occurs when there is a threat or intruder inside the building.

**“Lock Out”** procedures are used when the danger is in the building and conditions are safer outside the building.

The Parish Religious Education Program should consult with local or state law enforcement for the development of “Lock Down” and “Lock Out” plans and procedures for their location. It is the responsibility of the Director of Religious Education to in-service the Catechetical staff regarding these plans and procedures. The Director of Religious Education should schedule practice drills throughout the academic year.

## SHELTER IN PLACE

Some emergencies call for all to take shelter immediately. Examples are (but not limited to) a hurricane, tornado or hazardous waste release in the general area. The Religious Education Program should stock water and snacks and have easy access to flashlights, a cell phone and portable radio. If the Parish Religious Education Program meets in a school building, the Director of Religious Education is encouraged to coordinate the Shelter in Place plan with the school principal.

## HAZARDOUS WASTE

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, hazardous waste is defined as waste that is dangerous or potentially harmful to one's health or the environment and can be liquids, solids, gases, or sludges.

The catechist must be aware of the following:

- disposal of hazardous waste on the parish site
- parish staff person responsible for the safe removal of hazardous waste.

# Safe Environment Requirements



## SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is committed to creating a network of prevention and protection for the children entrusted to the care of the Archdiocese. Through the Safe Environment Program, the Office for Child and Youth Protection assists parishes, schools and Youth Ministry programs to comply with Policies for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Safe Environment Program is a comprehensive child safety and child sexual abuse prevention and education program which includes but is not limited to the following requirements:

- providing training to clergy, parish personnel, school personnel, catechists, teachers and volunteers regarding their responsibility, under civil law, as mandated reporters. This training also pertains to Archdiocesan personnel who are working in social services and educational ministry.
- obtaining the background checks of all archdiocesan personnel, including clergy, religious and laity, as well as volunteers who have any possible contact with children
- providing abuse prevention educational programs for students who attend Archdiocesan elementary and secondary schools and parish religious education programs.

### SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

The Safe Environment training is a required awareness program for adults who are Archdiocese of Philadelphia clergy, employees or volunteers who have regular contact with children. Trainees learn the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, steps to prevent or avoid sexual abuse and Pennsylvania law and Archdiocesan policy for reporting suspected child abuse. Catechists may not begin their ministry until all training is completed. For more information, go to [ww.chilyouthprotection.org](http://ww.chilyouthprotection.org) to the staff and volunteer link.

### BACKGROUND CHECKS

All clearances must be obtained and updated according to Archdiocesan policy. It is the responsibility of parish administration to keep the records of each employee and volunteer, and to renew these background checks accordingly. Catechists may not begin their ministry until all clearances are obtained. For more information, go to: [www.chilyouthprotection.org](http://www.chilyouthprotection.org)

### YOUTH LEADER VOLUNTEERS

Minors who volunteer (under 18) with students must be supervised at all times while working with children. If the minors are unpaid they are not required to obtain clearances. Minors 14-17 in a paid position responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children are required to obtain background checks and clearances.

### THE STANDARDS OF MINISTERIAL BEHAVIOR AND BOUNDARIES

The Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are intended to provide clear standards of behavior and boundaries of appropriate behavior regarding all interactions with children and young people by priests, deacons, religious, pastoral ministers, administrators, staff and volunteers in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. These standards are reviewed during the safe environment training. Trainees are required to sign an acknowledgment form and return to the place of service.

For a Safe Environment Checklist for clearances and training, refer to Appendix 18.

## MANDATED REPORTING LAWS

As defined by Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, a mandated reporter is any individual, including both paid (staff) and unpaid (volunteer), who are an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service and accept responsibility for a child. Additionally, anyone who is supervised or managed by a mandated reporter is also a mandated reporter. A child is defined as an individual under the age of eighteen.

### CATECHIST AS MANDATED REPORTER

The state of Pennsylvania defines child abuse as an act or failure to act which is committed intentionally, knowingly or recklessly. Child abuse includes bodily injury, serious mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, serious physical neglect, fabricating, feigning or inducing medical symptom or disease. Any person who comes into contact with children in the course of their employment or volunteer service must report suspected child abuse.

A catechist, therefore, is a mandated reporter. A catechist may view the role of a mandated reporter as difficult and challenging. The catechist may equate a disclosure or suspicion of child abuse with breaking a confidence or invading another's privacy. It is a proven fact, however, that students usually disclose abuse to a trusted adult because they want the adult to take action on his or her behalf.

In the case of a disclosure or a suspicion of abuse, the catechist must report directly and immediately to Child Line, the PA Statewide hotline, via phone or online,. He/she must also complete the CY-47 form and submit to the county children and youth agency if reported by phone. The form can be submitted electronically or via hard copy (see the OCYP website for further information). The catechist must also immediately notify the person in charge of the institution.

For a brochure for responding to a student's disclosure, see Appendix 19.

### “KID TALK”: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION LESSONS

The Parish Religious Education Program is required to teach one personal safety lesson annually. The Parish Religious Education personal safety lessons are entitled “Kid Talk”: Child Abuse Prevention lesson, Archdiocese of Philadelphia Religious Education Program and can be found at: <http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/> The Office for Catechetical Formation and the Office for Child and Youth Protection recommend that these lessons are taught in the second semester as a relationship between the catechist and students has been established.

### PARENT OPT OUT

Parents/guardians may opt out their child from the scheduled session for the teaching of this lesson. Parents should receive ample notification of when the lesson will be presented and provided an opportunity to review the lesson. The Director of Religious Education should, however, encourage parents who do not wish their child to receive a lesson to review this important lesson with their child at home.

The Director of Religious Education must obtain a written signed and dated opt out form from the parent or guardian. These forms are to be submitted to the Office for Child and Youth Protection with the annual parish audit report.

For a sample Opt Out Form, refer to Appendix 20.

Home based catechesis parents/guardians are expected to teach these lessons unless he/she chooses to excuse the child(ren) from these lessons. Parents may choose to opt-out of these lessons for their child (ren) by submitting the Home Based Catechesis opt out form to the parish Director/Coordinator of Religious Education.

For a sample Opt Out form for Home Based Catechesis, see Appendix 25

#### PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY

Parental permission is necessary for the photographing or filming of Parish Religious Education students. Without this permission, photos and/or videos may not be taken of a child in a classroom or parish group setting such as the reception of sacraments.

The Director of Religious Education is to obtain an **annual** written permission for each student and retain on file for the entire school year. Before taking pictures or videotaping students, the catechist must check that parental permission has been granted.

The Photo and Video Permission may be included as a line item on the Parish Religious Education Program Registration Form (Appendix 10), or refer to Appendix 21 for a sample form.

#### LIMITED CONTROLLED ACCESS TO THE PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PARENTS IDENTIFIED AS SEXUAL OFFENDERS

Parishes are to follow the guidelines developed by the Office for Child and Youth Protection regarding the presence of parents/guardians identified as sexual offenders.

Refer to Appendix 22 for these parish guidelines.

#### ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Permission of the parent or guardian must be obtained, in writing, in order for an adult to communicate with minors via telephone, cell phone, text messaging, e-mail, social networks, or other electronic means. See Appendix 23 for a “Consent Form for Electronic Communications with Minors” form.



# The Parish Religious Education Program



## PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOKS

An essential component of Parish Religious Education Programs are handbooks. PREP handbooks clearly outline the catechetical mission of the Catholic Church but also the policies, guidelines and procedures of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the local parish community. Therefore, the Parish Religious Education Program should provide a handbook for catechists and a handbook for families which is issued annually. The handbook may be in an electronic or paper format.

**The FAMILY HANDBOOK** should include but not limited to the following topics:

- An introduction to the catechetical ministry of the Catholic Church/parish
- Annual Parish Religious Education Program calendar
- Program or class cancellation due to emergencies or inclement weather
- Home-based catechesis policies
- Discipline policies
- Curriculum overview
- Access and Inclusion of students
- Arrival and dismissal times and procedures for students
- Family drop off and pick up of students with parental permissions
- student attendance
- student homework
- student assessments
- student progress reports
- illness and/or injury of students
- Custody issues
- Safety policies
- Safe Environment policies
- Food in classrooms/students with food allergies

**CATECHIST HANDBOOK:** elements of the Family Handbook should be included in the Catechist Handbook as well as but not limited to the following:

- prayer environment and prayer at beginning or end of session (classroom or communal)
- relationship with day school teacher/use of classroom if applicable
- relationship with the classroom aide (s)
- acceptable attire for catechists and students
- lesson plans
- classroom management (include arrival and departure time for catechist)
- Confidentiality
- attendance records
- learning/medical data of student
- parish resources/personnel for children with disabilities
- incident reports
- approval of guest speakers
- use of parish resources
- approval for catechist use of outside resources in the classroom (multi-media, technology, websites, in particular, YouTube, Apps, etc.)
- guidance regarding the catechist's use of internet sources for personal theological background
- use of bathroom facilities during the religious education session
- use of hall monitors
- The teaching of personal safety lessons
- Electronic Communication with minors
- communication with other staff, parents/children (written or electronic)
- trips
- reimbursement for supplies



# Appendices



## QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR A PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CATECHIST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

1. This catechist meets the following personal qualifications and abilities:
  - a fully initiated, practicing Catholic
  - eighteen years of age or older
  - an exemplary follower of Christ with unquestioned personal integrity and moral character
  - committed to presenting the authentic teachings of the Church
  - committed to developing a greater personal understanding of Catholicism
  - a person of prayer who has carefully discerned the ministry of catechesis
  - a disciple of Christ who can share his/her faith with students in an age appropriate manner
  - an effective communicator with adults and children
  - capable of relating to people in general and children in particular
  - capable of working collaboratively.
  
2. This catechist has completed all Safe Environment Training and submitted all clearances and forms as required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.
  
3. This catechist understands and agrees to the Archdiocesan Catechetical Certification Policy.
  
4. This catechist understands and agrees to his/her parish responsibilities:
  - completion of a personal information record (Appendix II)
  - adherence to the Archdiocesan Religion Guidelines
  - adherence to the policies/calendar of the Parish Religious Education Program
  - adherence to the directives of the Director of Parish Religious Education
  - attendance at catechist meetings
  - preparation of lesson plans in a thorough and faithful manner
  - submission of lesson plans if requested by the Director of Religious Education
  - punctuality for class
  - responsibility for his/her classroom or meeting space
  - proper attire
  - evaluation by the Director of Religious Education.

I have reviewed this document with the above named catechist.

---

Signature of the Director of Religious Education

Date



CATECHIST INFORMATION					
Last name	First	Maiden	<input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms.	Marital status (circle one) <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
Street address/Apt		Home phone no. (   )		Cell phone no. (   )	
City		State/Zip Code		Date of Birth	
Are you a registered, baptized Catholic of this parish? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <i>If "no", please indicate the name and address of the parish where you are registered in space below.</i>					
Parish Name			Parish Address		
Archdiocesan Catechetical Certification Have you attained Archdiocesan Catechetical Certification? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no  Are you familiar with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catechetical Certification policy? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Please indicate your total number of credits towards Catechetical Certification _____					
Safe Environment/Clearances: Have you obtained all clearances and participated in all training as required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia which are listed in the "Safe Environment Checklist (Appendix XIV)? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Number of years teaching Religious Education		Other Parishes Served			
Are you a recipient of the following Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catechetical Awards: _____ St. John Neumann (Date: _____)    _____ Pius X (Date: _____)    _____ Our Lady of Guadalupe (Date: _____) _____ St. Martin DePorres (Date: _____)    _____ St. Charles Borromeo (Date: _____)    _____ Pope John Paul II (Date: _____)					
Why do you feel called to the Catechetical Ministry?					
Catechist Signature:			Date:		
					
Grade Level Assigned: <input type="checkbox"/> Catechist <input type="checkbox"/> Aide <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
Director of Religious Education Signature:			Date:		



# Catechist Evaluation Form

Evaluation is an important element in quality catechist formation. Separate copies of the following form can be completed by the catechist, the Director of Religious Education, or both. Each

can use it to assess particular areas of strength and areas where growth is needed. This form can serve as an important springboard to a constructive evaluative discussion.

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

	CONSISTENTLY	ADEQUATELY	RARELY	NEVER		CONSISTENTLY	ADEQUATELY	RARELY	NEVER
<b>Promoting Knowledge of the Faith</b>					<b>Moral Formation</b>				
Teaches Catholic beliefs and traditions appropriate to the age level of the children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fosters children's understanding of Christian morality and good decision-making skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibits an enthusiasm for the Catholic faith and a desire to continue to learn about it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Helps children apply Catholic, Christian values to their everyday lives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participates in various workshops and courses to further knowledge about the Catholic faith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Models Catholic values for the children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Liturgical Education</b>					<b>Teaching to Pray</b>				
Helps the children learn about and celebrate the Church's liturgical year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assists children in understanding the importance of prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourages the children to fully participate in worship and the sacraments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incorporates a variety of prayer forms into lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regularly participates in the liturgical life of the parish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepares and utilizes a prayer area for the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
					Takes time for personal spiritual renewal and has a regular practice of prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Education for  
Community Life**

Makes the classroom a loving Christian community so that children can experience and understand its importance

Communicates well with parents and includes them from time to time in class sessions; encourages the children to share what they have learned with their families

Recognizes and affirms the unique gifts of each child in the class

Makes an effort to spend time sharing ideas with other catechists

Attends catechist gatherings in the parish

**Missionary Initiation**

Encourages the children to participate in service activities offered either through the class or through the larger parish

Helps the children make faith connections to events and people in their families, communities, and around the world

Challenges the children to think of the many different ways they can make a difference in the world

**Classroom Management**

Arrives in a timely fashion in order to appropriately prepare for the session

Prepares an overall lesson plan in advance of the catechetical session

Is flexible when lesson plans need to be adjusted for effectiveness

Includes a variety of methods and incorporates media in lesson plans to keep students interested and involved

Shows a familiarity with and utilizes the various components of the textbook series

Is attentive to different learning styles and intelligences

Demonstrates effective and appropriate discipline and management strategies

Shows an understanding of the impact of environment on the learner

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Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Catechist
Program Director

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Date

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**Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
Office for Catechetical Formation  
Parish Religious Education Program  
Catholic Elementary School Teacher Form**

Catholic Elementary School teachers who serve as the lead catechist in a Parish Religious Education program may earn one (1) elective to satisfy the elective credit requirement or annual update credit for their dedicated service as a catechist. To obtain (1) elective or annual update credit, the catechist must fill out this form annually and:

- submit to your Director/Coordinator of Religious Education for his/her signature.
- retain the original for your file
- give a copy to your principal for your personnel file
- send a signed and dated copy for your Archdiocesan record to :

*Office for Catechetical Formation  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
222 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299*

Catechist Name:

Last 4 digits of Social Security #:

Home Address:

Phone:

Email:

Parish Religious Education Program of service/City:

The above named catechist has served as the lead classroom catechist and has been faithful to his/her duties for this academic year.

**Director, Parish Religious Education**

**Date**





**Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
Office for Catechetical Formation  
Parish Religious Education Program  
Volunteer Catechist Form**

Religious Education Catechists who serve as the lead classroom catechist may earn one (1) elective or annual update credit for their dedicated service. Upon the completion of their fifth (5th) year, the catechist should fill out this form and have it signed and dated by the Director/Coordinator of Religious Education. After the 5th year, the catechist may submit annually to satisfy the elective credit requirement. The original should be kept by the catechist and a copy should be added to their parish file.

In order to update the Archdiocesan record, a signed and dated copy must be sent to:

*Office for Catechetical Formation  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
222 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299*

Catechist Name:
Last 4 digits of Social Security #:
Home Address:
Phone: <span style="margin-left: 150px;">Email:</span>
Parish Religious Education Program of service/City:

The above named catechist has served as the lead classroom catechist and has been faithful to his/her duties. Upon the close of this academic year, he/she has served for:

\_\_\_\_\_ five years      \_\_\_\_\_ six years      \_\_\_\_\_ seven years in Religious Education.  
\_\_\_\_\_ annual update

**Director, Parish Religious Education**

**Date**



## BASIC VOCABULARY FOR CATECHISTS

The following is a compilation of basic vocabulary for the catechists.

CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
GDC	General Directory for Catechesis
GIRM	General Instruction of the Roman Missal
LG	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)
NDC	National Directory for Catechesis
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
NAB	New American Bible (translation used in Lectionary)
USCCA	United States Catholic Catechism for Adults
OCF	Office of Catechetical Formation (Archdiocese of Philadelphia)

Angel – A spiritual, personal, and immortal creature, with intelligence and free will, who glorifies God without ceasing and who serves God as a messenger of His saving plan.

Annunciation – The visit of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary to inform her that she was to be the mother of the Savior. After giving her consent to God's word, Mary became the mother of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Solemnity is celebrated on March 25.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – The dogma which recognizes Mary's being taken, at the end of her earthly life, body and soul, into Heaven. This Solemnity is celebrated on August 15 and is normally a Holy Day of Obligation.

Canon law – The Church's rules (canons or laws) that provide the norms for good order in the visible Church.

Catechesis - the act of handing on the Word of God intended to inform the faith community and candidates for initiation into the Church about the teachings of Christ.

Catechist- is a person who facilitates the process of faith formation, first by echoing the word of God in his or her own life and second by helping others to do so.

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Church – The assembly of the People God has called together from “the ends of the earth.” The Church draws her life from the Word of God and from the Body of Christ, and so herself becomes Christ’s Body.

Concupiscence – An inclination to actual sin, due to the effects of original sin. Even though Baptism removes sin itself, concupiscence remains even after Baptism

Conscience – Interior voice implanted by God in every person; discerns right from wrong.

Covenant – A sacred oath between human persons, or between God and man which involves mutual commitments or guarantees.

Deposit of Faith – The heritage of faith contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, handed on in the Church from the time of the Apostles, from which the Magisterium draws all that it proposes as being divinely revealed.

Doctrine/Dogma– The name given to divinely revealed truths proclaimed or taught by the Church’s Magisterium; the faithful are obliged to believe these truths.

Ecclesial/Ecclesiastical – Pertaining to, or of, the Church.

Evangelization – The ministry and mission of proclaiming and witnessing Christ and his Gospel with the intention of deepening the faith of believers and inviting others to be baptized and initiated into the Church.

Evangelist – One of the four authors of the Gospel : Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Grace – The free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children.

- Sanctifying grace – a habitual gift of God’s own life, a stable supernatural disposition that enables us to live with God and to act by his love.
- Actual grace – God’s interventions in our lives to help us conform our lives to his will.
- Sacramental grace and charisms – gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation

Heaven – Eternal life with God; communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the blessed; the state of supreme and definitive happiness, the goal of the deepest longings of humanity.

Hell – State of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed; reserved for those who refuse by their own free choice to believe and be converted from sin, even to the end of their lives.

Image of God – Human persons are like God in that they possess powers of intellect (thinking, judging, understanding, self reflection) and will (power to choose freely), and also in that they are made to share by knowledge and love in His divine life.

Immaculate Conception – The dogma proclaimed in 1854 that Mary from the moment of her conception, and through the anticipated merits won by Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection, was immune from original sin. Patroness of the United States and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, thus, always a holy day of obligation (December 8<sup>th</sup>).

Incarnation – Jesus, the Son of God, assumed human nature and became man in order to accomplish our salvation in that same human nature. Jesus is both true God and true man.

Indulgence – The remission of temporal punishment due to sin, granted to the faithful who recite specified prayers, visit a specified place of pilgrimage, or engage in a specified act of charity; punishment is remitted through the power of the Church and in the mutual exchange of spiritual goods, particularly the merits of Christ and the saints.

Infallibility – Gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church whereby the pastors of the Church, the pope and bishops in union with him, can definitively proclaim a doctrine of faith or morals for the belief of the faithful. This gift is related to the inability of the whole body to err in matters of faith and morals.

Jesus – Second Person of the Holy Trinity; the only-begotten Son of God; one divine Person with two complete natures—divine and human; fully God and fully man, not part God and part man.

Lectionary - order of readings, which lists texts for Sundays and feasts, for weekdays throughout the year, for Masses of the saints and for other special occasions.

Magisterium – The living, teaching office of the Church, composed of the Pope and the bishops in union with him, which ensures the Church's fidelity to the teachings of the Apostles in matters of faith and morals. St. Peter was the first Pope.

Marks of the Church – Four attributes of the Church of Christ mentioned in the Nicene Creed: one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

Mary, Mother of God – Mary is the only physical parent of Jesus. Since Mary conceived and gave birth to Him Who is the Second Person of the Trinity Incarnate, she is rightly called the Mother of God. This solemnity is celebrated on January 1 and is normally a Holy Day of Obligation.

Mass – The Eucharist or principal sacramental celebration of the Church, established by Jesus at the Last Supper. Through the ministry of the ordained priest, the Holy Spirit makes present at Mass Christ's Paschal Mystery. The two primary parts of the Mass are the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Mortal sin – Grave infraction of the law of God that destroys divine life (sanctifying grace) in the soul of the sinner. For a sin to be mortal, it must involve grave matter, full knowledge of the evil of the act, and deliberate consent of the will.

Natural law – The rational apprehension of the created moral order, an ability we have due to our being made in God's image. It expresses the dignity of the human person and forms the basis of our fundamental rights.

Original sin – The sin by which the first humans disobeyed God, resulting in the loss of original innocence and holiness. It also describes the fallen state of human nature that affects every person who is born into this world.

Paschal Mystery – Christ’s work of redemption accomplished principally by His Passion, Death Resurrection and Ascension whereby “dying he destroyed our death, rising you restored our life”. It is celebrated and made present in the Church’s liturgy and its effects are communicated most especially through the sacraments, and above all in the Holy Eucharist.

Perpetual Virginity of Mary – Mary is ever-virgin (before, during and after the birth of Jesus).

Purgatory – Temporary state, after death, whereby souls who are destined for heaven (those who die in a state of sanctifying grace), but who are still not perfectly purified of sin and its effects, are purified from sin and its effects and are made ready for eternal life with God.

Revelation – God’s disclosure of Himself by which He reveals His divine plan. The fullness of God’s revelation of Himself is found in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Sacramentary or Roman Missal - a recollection of presidential prayers for the celebration of the Eucharist. The Sacramentary does not contain Scripture readings, responsorial psalms, or verses for the gospel acclamation.

Sacrament - An efficacious sign of grace instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Sacraments of Initiation - lay the foundations of every Christian life. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life.

Sacramentals – Sacred signs instituted by the Church. They signify effects, especially of a spiritual nature, that are obtained through the intercession of the Church. Some examples of sacramentals are blessings and exorcisms, as well as forms of popular piety such as pilgrimages, processions, devotions, novenas, wearing Marian medals and recitation of the rosary.

Sin – Any intentional thought, word, deed or omission that violates God’s law.

Trinity – The mystery of the three Divine Persons in the one God. The three Divine Persons are the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus explicitly revealed that the one God is a Trinity of Persons. (in addition Mt. 28: 19)

Transubstantiation – Term used to indicate that through the consecration of the bread and wine there occurs the entire change of the substances of bread and wine into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ—even though the appearances or “species” of bread and wine remain.

Venial sin – Sin that does not destroy the divine life (sanctifying grace) in the soul of the sinner, though it diminishes and wounds it.

## PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN

## THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

## THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## GRACE BEFORE MEALS

Bless us O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## GRACE AFTER MEALS

We give you thanks for all your benefits, Almighty God who live and reign for ever. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

## MORNING OFFERING

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all my relatives and friends, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father. Amen.

## PRAYER TO MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love entrusts me here. Ever this day be at my side to light, to guard to rule and guide. Amen.

## ACT OF FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe that You are one God in Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that Your Divine Son became Man, and die for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living

and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because You have revealed them, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

## ACT OF HOPE

O my God, relying on Your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

## ACT OF LOVE

O my God, I love You above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because You are all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

## ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy punishments, but most of all because they offend thee, my God, Who are all-good and worthy of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

## THE ANGELUS

Leader: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary:  
All: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary....

Leader: Behold the handmaid of the Lord:  
All: Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary . . .

Leader: And the Word was made Flesh:  
All: And dwelt among us. Hail Mary . . .

Leader: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,  
All: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Leader: Let us pray:  
All: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

## THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven and *by the power of the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.* For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day, in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## HAIL, HOLY QUEEN

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our Life, our Sweetness, and our Hope. To Thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To Thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, Thine Eyes of Mercy toward us, and after this our exile show us the Blessed Fruit of thy Womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us O Holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

## THE MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you I come; before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

## THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

The Five Joyful Mysteries are:

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries are:

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord

The Five Glorious Mysteries are:

1. The Resurrection of Our Lord
2. The Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles
4. The Assumption of Our Blessed Mother to Heaven
5. The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother in Heaven

The Five Luminous Mysteries are:

1. The Baptism of Our Lord in the River Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration of Our Lord
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

## FATIMA PRAYER

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of Hell; lead all souls into Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy. Amen.

## PRAYER AFTER THE ROSARY

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech Thee, that, meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**LESSON PLAN FOR 90 MINUTE SESSION**

Lesson Plan for \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson Objective/Focus:**

**Key Ideas/ Study Words**

**Supplies:**

**TIME BREAKDOWN**

- **Icebreaker/Review of Previous Lesson (10 min.)** Time from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Action Plan:
  
- **Opening Prayer/Gospel Gathering (approx. 10 min.)** Time from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Action Plan:
  
- **Lesson Opening Activity (5 min.)** Time: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Materials needed:  
  
 Action Plan:
  
- Teach/Apply (30 min.)** Time: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Action Plan:

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**Time:** (30 min.)

**Buddy Activity/Service Project/Liturgical Event/Creative Enrichment: Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Materials:

Action Plan:

**Closing Prayer and Dismissal** (5 min.)

**Evaluation of Lesson:**

I rate this lesson plan:    \_\_\_ Very Good    \_\_\_ Average    \_\_\_ Disappointing

The activity the children enjoyed most was:

Something I would do differently to improve this lesson:

Ideas for educational approaches:

Reading Aloud

CD

Chalkboard

Charts/Posters

Conversation

Creative Writing

DVD

Discussion

Drama/skits

Church Trip

Flannel Board

Guest Speaker

Lecture

Making things

Maps

Memorization

Problem Solving

Projects

Puppets

Question/answer

Quiz

Reports

Review Games

Singing

Role Play

Story Telling

Video/Internet streaming

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCESS AND INCLUSION MODEL**  
Parish Religious Education Programs  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia

*Providing for an inclusive faith formation program is only limited by our imagination. This is a suggested model of inclusion:*

**I  
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**Full Integration**

The student participates in the religious education classroom with peers.

**Integration with Accommodations**

The student participate in classroom with the support of a catechist assistant, peer tutor or therapeutic support staff (wrap-around).

**Integration with Individualized Instruction**

The student participates in classroom opening prayer, program liturgies and special classroom activities. Student receives individualized instruction.

**Program Integration in Learning Support Classroom**

The student participates in small group learning support classroom using an adapted curriculum and materials.

*Parish liturgical celebrations and catechetical programs should be accessible to persons with disabilities and open to their full, active, and conscious participation according to their capacity.*

A Framework of Access and Inclusion: Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities  
A statement of the U. S. Catholic Bishops 1999



**For Office Use**  
 Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parish Religious Education Program Registration Form**

NAME OF PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete Form. Print clearly. For first time registrations, please bring an original and one copy of each child's Baptismal Certificate.**

Child's Full Name (First, Middle, & Last)	Sex M/F	Date of Birth	Grade Level	Name of Day School	Baptism Date & Parish	1 <sup>st</sup> Penance Date	1 <sup>st</sup> Communion Date

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work or Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work or Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

**CUSTODY: Are there any custody/legal issues?**  yes  no (If yes, please provide a complete copy of the latest court order.)

\*Name of person responsible for Religious Education if not a Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

\*Parent/guardian must provide a signed, dated letter of permission to the DRE which is to be kept on file and updated annually.

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby agree to the requirements and expectations of the (Parish NAME) Religious Education Program  
 to appear, with name, to be posted on the parish name website, bulletin boards, newspaper articles and all forms of social  
 media in the parish.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_

Please Turn---->

**Parish Religious Education Program Registration Form**

NAME OF PARISH

Family Name:
--------------

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:**

If we are unable to reach you, whom should we contact?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (home) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FOR MEDICAL CARE:**

I give permission that, in my absence, my children whose names appear on page 1 of this registration form, may receive emergency medical care for injuries and all situations that should occur while participating in the Religious Education Program programs and activities at (**PARISH NAME**) Parish.

Signed (Parent/Legal Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL/LEARNING DATA**

If any of the following apply to your child, please list his/her name and give details in the appropriate spaces.

Child's Name	Medical Conditions/Allergies	Prescribed Medications	Disability* / Learning Support Services	Individualized Education Program <b>IEP</b>
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Is there other information about your child that should be communicated?

\_\_\_\_\_

\* As defined by *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, the term "child with a disability" means a child: "with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

Name of Parish

Permission and Release Form  
For Transportation by a Catechist

I (we) as parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name(s)

give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to drive my child to and from the  
Catechist's Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Parish Religious Education Program.  
Name of Parish

I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ is not working in the role of a  
Catechist's Name

catechist while driving my child to and from the Parish Religious Education Program. I therefore  
release \_\_\_\_\_ and the Archdiocese of  
Name of Parish

Philadelphia from liability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Catechist Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Trip Permission and Release Form  
Name of Parish

I (we) as parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ give permission to  
Student's Name

participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. Parents/Guardians must  
Trip/event Location Date

transportation to and from \_\_\_\_\_ or I understand that my (our) child will travel to and from  
Location

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. This permission includes all related programs or  
Location Name of Transportation Provider

events associated with the \_\_\_\_\_. In consideration for my (our) child's participation  
Trip

I (we) and my (our) child agree and understand that we assume the risks inherent with this \_\_\_\_\_,  
Trip/event

and with full knowledge of the risks, I (we) agree to release and hold harmless \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parish

and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and their employees and representatives, from claims arising or related  
to my (our) child's participation. My (our) child understands and agrees to abide by all rules and regulations

established by the \_\_\_\_\_ pertaining to this \_\_\_\_\_.  
Name of Parish Trip/event

I (We) have spoken with my (our) child about his/her responsibility to act appropriately at all times.

I (We) consent to and give permission for emergency medical care for my (our) child that may be needed as  
a result of my (our) child's participation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Contact Phone #

Student must return this signed permission form by \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

\* The Director of Religious Education may also add a section for medical information such as the name and  
contact information for the family medical doctor and the family's medical insurance information.



## Act 175 Released Time

1. Prior to the religious education instruction/event, the Parish Director of Religious Education:
  - identifies school district (s) to be notified
  - contacts the superintendent's office for each district regarding its protocol regarding Act 175. If possible, this contact should be prior to the beginning of the school year.
  - determines if the letter of permission is addressed to the superintendent, local school principal or another school district official
  - avoids scheduling conflicts by checking the public school district's calendar against the Parish Religious Education date (s) for the instruction/event( s)
  - requests the school district to add the Parish Religious Program instruction/event to its calendars and if possible, notify school principal (s) and teacher (s)
  - creates a letter for parents which is addressed to the proper school district official (superintendent or principal), refers to Act 175 and describes the date, hours, and purpose of the religious education instruction/event ( Appendix XI)
  - distributes this letter to parents/guardians with the following instructions:
    - parent/guardian completes information and signs letter
    - parent/guardian returns completed letter to the Parish Religious Education Director by due date
    - parent/guardian understands that this letter will be forwarded to the designated school official by the Director of Religious Education on his/her behalf
    - parent/guardian should inform their child's day school teacher of the religious education instruction/event
    - parent/guardian should contact the Parish Director of Religious Education on the day of the event if his/her child will be absent
  - includes a trip release form (Appendix IX) if the religious instruction/event is not held on parish property
  - sends parent/guardian letters of permission to the designated school district official.
  
2. On the day of the religious education instruction/event, the Director of Religious Education:
  - keeps a list of participating students' names, home and emergency phone numbers as well as the student's school name and school phone number
  - checks voicemail or emails for absentees
  - contacts parents and/or school immediately and before departure regarding absentees who are scheduled for event and are not present.
  
3. After religious education instruction/event, the Director of Religious Education sends an official a list of students' names who participated in the religious education event to the school district.







## GUIDELINES FOR HOME-BASED CATECHESIS OF CHILDREN ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

### I. Home-based Catechesis

“Catechesis describes the essential ministry of the Church through which the teachings of Christ have been passed on to believers throughout the ages....Catechesis is an education in the faith of children, young people and adults.” (National Directory for Catechesis, no.1) Home-based catechesis is understood as the work of Catholic parents/guardians who undertake the formal religious education of their own child(ren) for any length of time and in their home.

### II. Doctrinal Foundations

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia recognizes that the Church’s teaching consistently affirms that parents are called to be the primary educators of their own children.

-“Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children.” (Second Vatican Council, Declaration on Christian Education, no. 3)

-“Parents have the first responsibility of the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2223)

-“Parents are the first and most important educators of their own children.” (John Paul II, Letter to Families, 16)

-“Parents have the right and the duty to choose the kind of educational environment that they determine best suits their children’s educational need. Therefore, home schooling is a viable option for the general education of children.” (National Directory for Catechesis, no.61)

### III. Pastoral Application

Although home-based catechesis is a viable option, the words of Pope John Paul II must also be considered: “Catechesis can be given anywhere, but I wish to stress ... that the parish community must continue to be the prime mover.” (Catechesi Tradendae, no.67)

Parents who choose to provide the religious instruction of **their own** child(ren) in **their** home must recognize that “Catechesis must be complete and authentic. The bishop of the diocese, the pastor of the parish, the parents, and the children all have God-given responsibilities that must be respected in considering home-based catechesis....Parents who choose...to be the primary catechist of their children must adhere to the guidelines for catechists as outlined by the diocesan bishop.” (National Directory for Catechesis, no.61)

Home-based catechesis is a cooperative and collaborative effort between the parents and parish leadership. This relationship helps parents who choose home-based catechesis to be a part of the total catechetical effort of the parish and “should not feel alone in this task.” (National Directory for Catechesis, no. 61)

Categories of a Catholic family who chooses home-based catechesis are:

-Parents who choose to have their own child(ren) home-schooled for all academic subjects and choose to provide formal religious education in their own home, assuming the role of catechist for only their own child(ren).

-Parents who send their child(ren) to public or private non-Catholic school and provide formal religious education in their own home, assuming the role of catechist for only their own child(ren).

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia does not recognize home-based catechesis of children in a home other than their own, and therefore, does not permit groups of children gathering for catechesis other than at the parish.

#### IV. Parish Guidelines

The following guidelines are provided to assist parishes in ministering to families who choose home-based catechesis:

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will register in their parish and declare their option for home-based catechesis for their own child(ren). The names of the children under instruction must be clearly identified. (See Appendix A.)
2. Before the home-based catechesis begins, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are to meet with the pastor and/or his delegate to discuss the reasons for this decision and to ensure that the catechesis provided in the home is the catechesis of the Church. This dialogue is essential to the complete and authentic catechesis of their own children in their homes.
3. The pastor or his delegate will provide the parents with a copy of the Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guidelines for the grade level(s), approved textbooks, and a set of expectations which include:
  - Meetings throughout the year with the pastor or his delegate to review the child's progress.
  - Liturgies, prayer services, activities, retreats, programs, meetings or other parish opportunities in which the child and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) attendance is expected.
4. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to use the textbooks and supplemental catechetical materials which have been approved by the pastor for use in the Parish Religious Education Program.
5. Should the parent/guardian seek permission for use of another text which is not included on the approved textbook list, a copy must be provided to the pastor or his delegate for review. All materials must be approved by the Office for Catechetical Formation.
6. Families providing home-based catechesis should be included in any informational mailings pertaining to the parish religious education program and/or the preparation and celebration of the sacraments. They are to be welcomed in all parish catechetical program activities.
7. Since their children are being initiated into the Catholic Church, parent(s)/guardian(s) have an obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the Church. They should participate in:
  - the spiritual life of the parish, particularly in the Sunday Eucharist.
  - the charitable works of the parish.
  - the catechetical and faith formation opportunities on the parish and archdiocesan levels.
8. The Catechetical Certification Policy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia fosters the professional development and the spiritual, intellectual, and human formation of volunteer catechists by requiring them to:
  - enroll in core courses provided by the Catechetical Institute
  - attend elective credit opportunities offered by the Office for Catechetical Formation.

Pastors should provide a copy of the Catechetical Certification Policy to parents/guardians who serve as catechists for their child(ren) and recommend their adherence to this policy.

Approved by  
Archbishop Charles Chaput  
May 31, 2012

<b>Parish Religious Education Incident Report</b>		
Date & time of incident	Name of person making report	Position
Names of person(s) involved in the incident:		
Did the incident take place in the classroom? State location if not in classroom. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If incident happened outdoors, describe the weather conditions.		
Was the catechist present? If no, please supply name (s) of responsible personnel. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Name(s) of witnesses and contact information:		
Describe the incident in full detail (use reverse side if necessary):		
Describe actions taken before (preventive) and after the incident. Use reverse side if necessary.		
Were treatments given on site? (If yes, please describe.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Was hospitalization necessary? If yes, please explain and include name/location of hospital.		
Please describe how the parent/guardian (s) was notified:		
Signature of Person completing report:		Date submitted:
Director of Religious Education Signature:		Date:



## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

### Office First Aid Supplies

(Store in a milk crate)

- First Aid/CPR book or chart
- Blank Incident Reports (see Appendix XII)
- Copies of Hand washing Instructions  
(see Column II)
- Box of disposable, latex free disposable gloves (medium/large)
- Spray bottle for chlorine spray to sanitize area (Mix 1 part chlorox to 10 parts water when needed; do not keep as mixture breaks down)
- Bottle of chlorox
- Large zip lock bags (for soiled clothes)
- Small garbage bags
- Sandwich bags
- Red bags for hazardous waste (check with pastor or school principal)
- Ammonia inhalant capsules
- 4x4 gauze bandages
- Box of band-aids
- Alcohol swaps or antiseptic towelettes
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Roll of gauze bandages
- Adhesive tape
- Scissors
- Hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Tissues
- Tweezers
- Neosporin

### Individual Classroom First Aid Packet\*

(Store in a large zip lock bag)

- 2 large zip lock bags
- 2 pair gloves
- 2 snack size zip lock bags  
(especially for Tooth Fairy!)
- 2 gauze pads (3" or 4")
- Assorted band-aids
- Tissues
- Purell packet B or give each room its own bottle
- 1 copy — Hand washing technique and laundry instructions
- 1 copy — Incident Report

\*if possible, the parish should supply for each catechist.

### Hand washing

Proper hand washing is important..

Use soap & warm water.

Wash hands vigorously under running water for 1 full minute.

Rinse and dry hands thorough with paper towels or blow dryer. Do not use cloth towel.

### Hand washing technique for medical asepsis

Stand away from the sink so as not to have clothing in contact with sink.

Turn water on; adjust to warm temperature & keep water running during entire procedure.

Wet hands; apply soap thoroughly, under nails and between fingers.

Hold hands with fingers pointing downward.

Wash palms and backs of hands with strong friction motion.

Wash fingers & spaces between them, interlacing fingers, rubbing them up and down for 1 full minute with special attention to problem areas.

Rinse well, run water from wrists to fingers.

Dry thoroughly with paper towel from fingertips to wrists.

Turn off water with paper towel and discard in waste basket.

### Laundry Instructions for Clothing Soiled with Body Fluids

The most important factor in laundering clothing soiled in a school setting is the elimination of potentially infectious agents by soap and water.

Use disposable gloves of impenetrable material when handling soiled clothing.

Apply a disinfectant spray (comparable to Lysol) thoroughly to the soiled clothing.

Wash clothing soaked with bodily fluids separately from other items.

Pre-soak heavily soiled clothing; then wash and dry as usual.

Add one-half cup of household bleach to the wash cycle if the material is bleachable.

Dispose gloves according to the hazardous waste policy of parish.

Contact parent or guardian immediately if student's soiled clothes are sent home for laundering and convey the above instructions for laundering.



## SAFE ENVIRONMENT CHECK LIST

**Clearances must be obtained prior to the start date of employment or volunteer service.**

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS AND TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS**

All catechists and program volunteers, who are 18 and older, and lived in PA for less than 10 years must provide the following:

- PA State Police Criminal background check\*
- PA Dept. of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance\*
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Fingerprint (FBI) Clearance (DHS)\*
- Attend a Protecting God's Children Awareness Session and submit:
- Signed acknowledgment form for the Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries
- Mandated Reporter Training certificate of completion.

*\*Must be renewed every five years.*

All catechists and program volunteers, who are 18 and older, and **lived continuously in PA for 10 years** must provide the following:

- PA State Police Criminal background check\*
- PA Dept. of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance\*
- Disclosure Statement Application for volunteers to be filed at the place of service\*
- Attend a Protecting God's Children Awareness Session and submit:
- Signed acknowledgment form for the Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries
- Mandated Reporter Training certificate of completion.

*\*Must be renewed every five years.*

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES**

The following clearances must be obtained by employees and renewed every *five years*:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation Fingerprint Clearance (DHS)
- Pennsylvania State Police Clearance
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance

### **SUPERVISION**

\_\_\_\_\_ All volunteers who are under the age of 18 are supervised at all times by an adult who is in full compliance with the Safe Environment requirements.

### **REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE**

\_\_\_\_\_ All catechists and program volunteers understand their responsibilities as a "mandated reporter" in the state of Pennsylvania.

\_\_\_\_\_ The Director of Religious Education Program has reviewed the reporting procedure with all catechists and program volunteers.

### **LESSONS FOR STUDENTS**

\_\_\_\_\_ All catechists have received and reviewed the "Kid Talk" lesson plan for their level.

<http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardians have received notice of date (s) on which the personal safety lesson will be presented and informed of their right to opt out after review of this lesson.

\_\_\_\_\_ If (after reviewing the lesson) a parent/guardian (s) chooses to "opt out" their child(ren) from this instruction, the parish provides the "Opt Out" letter (see appendix XVI.) The parent/guardian(s) must sign, date and return to the Director of Religious Education who will retain on file. A copy of this letter must be included with the annual audit.

\_\_\_\_\_ Directors of Religious Education are encouraged to have additional support staff available on the day of instruction.

*Please contact the Office for Child and Youth Protection at 215-587-2466 if you have any questions.*



### MANDATED REPORTERS

In Pennsylvania, any person who comes into direct contact with children in the course of their paid or unpaid service must report suspected child abuse.

The role of a mandated reporter can be challenging. Students may feel that the adult in whom they have confided has betrayed their trust. Remember, students usually disclose abuse to an adult whom they trust, because they want the adult to take action on their behalf.

### HOW TO MAKE A REPORT?

Under Pennsylvania law and Archdiocesan policy, all reports of suspected abuse must go immediately and directly to ChildLine, Pennsylvania's

24-hour child abuse reporting hotline. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, the following three steps must be followed:

1. Call ChildLine at 800-932-0313.
2. Within 48-hours of your report, submit a written CY-47 report with the county Children & Youth services where the alleged abuse took place. The CY-47 may be completed electronically on the Department of Human Services website at [compass.state.pa.us/CWIS](http://compass.state.pa.us/CWIS) or downloaded from OCYP's website at [childyouth-protection.org](http://childyouth-protection.org).

### WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse involves an act or a failure to act by an individual against a child. In Pennsylvania, the act or failure to act must occur intentionally, knowingly or recklessly. PA law identifies specific categories of abuse which include: Bodily Injury, Serious Physical Neglect, Sexual Abuse or Exploitation, Serious and Mental Injury

### AFTER A DISCLOSURE

The student trusted you with a very personal matter. He/she knew that you would assist them in getting help to end an abusive situation.

You will still see the student on a regular basis, either in the classroom or in the parish community. You may be wondering: *How do I act? What do I say?*

Caring adults need to act in the best interest of the child, and this is not always an easy thing to determine. It is best to follow the student's lead. The child wants to relate to you as he/she did prior to the disclosure. The child does not want the abuse to define who he/she is.

Confidentiality and respect must be the found-



OFFICE FOR CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION | ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

## Responding to a Child's

## Disclosure of

You may be the trusted adult in whom a student confides.

It is important to be prepared to respond in a way that will both reassure and help the young

Office for Child and Youth Protection

Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
215-587-2466

### KEEPING GOD'S CHILDREN SAFE

One message that the students receive in the personal safety lesson is the importance of telling someone if they are being abused in any way, or if someone is making them feel uncomfortable or scared. For this reason, it is important that all the adults in the religious education program be prepared to respond to a child's disclosure of abuse.

Please take time to review this information and keep it in your folder or textbook for quick reference.

Given the sensitive nature of the personal safety lesson, it is strongly recommended that the regular catechist present the lesson. The catechist has a relationship with the students and knows how they usually interact and respond to topics.

### PREPARING TO PRESENT THE PERSONAL SAFETY LESSON:

Review the lesson and highlight the important issues to emphasize

Practice the lesson out loud; ask a friend to listen and provide feedback

Be ready to respond to a student's disclosure of abuse.

Practice saying, "It is good that you told me".

**The topic of the lesson is sexual abuse; however a student may report other forms of abuse.**

### REACTIONS TO THE LESSON

It is difficult to know how a student will react to a discussion of potential danger and unsafe people. Their reactions will vary depending on their experiences. Students may feel anxious during and after the lesson, and not understand why.

Children who have experienced trauma may become unsettled by a discussion concerning personal safety.

Some children are very sensitive and may have a reaction to the lesson. It is important to remember that just because a student reacts to the lesson, this does not mean that the child has been sexually assaulted or abused.

Children report abuse to people whom they trust. All members of the school staff should know how to respond to a child's disclosure and the process for reporting abuse.

### RESOURCES FOR CATECHISTS

Catechists are encouraged to register for an online account with Virtus. This will provide you with access to resources concerning the physical and emotional indicators of abuse, types of disclosures and how to respond to a student's report of abuse.

If you wish to create an account with Virtus, please call the Office for Child and Youth Protection at 215-587-2466.

### TYPES OF DISCLOSURES

**Direct:** A child tells you that he/she is being or has been abused

**Indirect:** These are more difficult to recognize as indicators of abuse. They require attention to subtle hints or signs of how the child is reacting and being respectful to someone. They may mean "I am hurting you" or "I am hurting us?"

In these instances, a child may be testing to see how you react before deciding to disclose something personal.

### RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

At the time of a disclosure of abuse, a child needs to feel safe and believed.

Your response is very important to the child. Here are some things to do:

1. Listen. Allow the child to talk.
2. Do not express panic, disgust or shock
3. Say, "It is good that you told me".
4. Reassure the child that this was not his/her fault.
5. Report the disclosure directly to ChildLine

On Parish letterhead

Date

Dear (Parent/Guardian name),

Article 12 of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People calls for all dioceses to establish safe environment programs at all grade levels, both in the Parish Religious Education Program and Parish Elementary School. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides a personal safety lesson for each level of the Parish Religious Education Program and mandates that this lesson is taught during one session of the instructional year. The Parish Religious Education personal safety lessons known as “Kid Talk” are posted at:

<http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>

After reviewing these lessons, you have expressed your desire for your child (ren) not to be present during the teaching of the personal safety lesson scheduled for (date). You therefore are required by the Office for Child and Youth Protection of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to complete and return this form to the Director of Parish Religious Education. Your signature on this form indicates your request to remove your child (ren) from this instruction.

The “Kid Talk” lesson is intended to supplement the conversations that a parent/guardian is having with his/her child regarding personal safety. It is recommend that a parent/guardian review this lesson at home for children who are not present for the religious education program instructional session.

Sincerely,

Name of Pastor

Name of Director of Religious Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Name of Child(ren)/ Level(s)

\_\_\_\_\_



Name of Parish Religious Education Program  
Photo/Video/Social Media Release Form  
School Year

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give the Archdiocese of Philadelphia/  
\_\_\_\_\_, its successors and assigns and those acting with authority,  
Name of Parish

the unqualified right and permission to reproduce, copyright and circulate pictures and/or video  
of my child produced and filmed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia\_\_\_\_\_.  
Name of Parish

I hereby warrant that I am free to give this permission. I further warrant that the information I  
have provided is to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address City, State, Zip



**LIMITED, CONTROLLED ACCESS OF ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY,  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS. PREP AND YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS  
FOR PARENTS IDENTIFIED AS SEXUAL OFFENDERS**

**Purpose:** This policy is written as a guideline to assist pastors in providing a safe environment for children as well as to protect the reputation of all parties involved when a parent or guardian is a sexual offender.

**Simply Defined:** These guidelines are to assist in the development of a safety plan which utilizes controlled and limited access to the elementary school, Parish Religious Education Preparation (PREP) or youth ministry.

For purposes of this policy a sexual offender is defined as someone who has been officially accused of sexual misconduct with a minor. This includes but is not limited to: those who have been arrested; pending trial or sentencing; convicted and serving a court ordered sentence; or are registered in the Pennsylvania State Police Megan's Law registry.

**Applicable to:** This policy is applicable to elementary schools, PREP and youth ministry.

**Safety Plan:** Once the identification of a sexual offender whose own children are attending the elementary school, PREP or Youth Ministry comes to the attention of the pastor, principal, director of PREP, or the youth minister the following guidelines should be considered for the development of a safety plan.

1. Protection of all children should be the first and foremost focus of the safety plan.
2. Due consideration should be given to the sexual offender and their interest to participate in the activities of their children.
3. If the victim of the sexual offender attends the elementary school, PREP or youth ministry and in anyway would come into contact with the sexual offender, then access to the school should be denied.
4. The pastor must meet with the sexual offender to acknowledge an awareness of the situation and this policy to begin development of a safety plan. The pastor may have other present, as he deems necessary.
5. Should it be determined that this parent or guardian should have limited, controlled access to the elementary school, PREP or youth ministry, the pastor may inform other employees of the situation and the safety plan on a "need to know basis".
6. Should it be determined that the parent or guardian have no access to the elementary school, PREP or youth ministry, the pastor must inform the parent or guardian in writing.

**LIMITED, CONTROLLED ACCESS OF ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY,  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS. PREP AND YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS  
FOR PARENTS IDENTIFIED AS SEXUAL OFFENDERS**

7. If there is a situation that requires the parent or guardian to come to the parish, elementary school, PREP or youth ministry to pick-up their children, the safety plan should include the identification of someone who will meet the parent or guardian at the door and escort them to the appropriate office. Once the children are in the office the parent or guardian and the children must also be escorted from the building. A determination should be made as to whether or not this exchange of custody of children should be in the school office, in the parking lot or another safe and appropriate venue.
8. At no time should the parent or guardian come to the elementary school, PREP or youth ministry without advanced notice to the pastor.
9. This parent or guardian is never permitted to pick-up or transport children not their own.
10. If there is a need for this parent or guardian to attend a parent teacher conference, it is recommended that this conference is scheduled at the end of the day or at a time when there will be fewer children in the school. At a parent teacher conference, the pastor or principal needs to identify an appropriate escort. If the parent or guardian wishes to attend a school sponsored event, the pastor should determine if this is a suitable venue for the parent or guardian. If the pastor determines that limited controlled access should be granted, the pastor must assign an escort to remain with the parent or guardian for the entire event. It is recommended that the escort be introduced to the parent or guardian prior to the event. The escort should be someone who is discreet, of great kindness and willing to serve in this role.

**Notifications:**

To the Office for Catechetical Formation if the parent or guardian has a child in the Parish Religious Education Program or a Youth Ministry Program.

To the Office of Catholic Education if the parent or guardian has a child in the elementary schools.

All situations also require notification to the Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection.





## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

### Consent Form for Electronic Communication with Minors

Permission of the parent or guardian must be obtained, in writing, in order for an adult leader to communicate with minors via telephone, cell phone, text messaging, e-mail, social networks, or other electronic means.

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town, State and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardian cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note: By providing the email address and cell phone number of a minor, the parent or guardian grants permission for electronic communication from the group leader to this young person in regards to all group related activities.*

**Optional information:**

Participant's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sharing of a minor's contact information:** (If the following statement is not checked, the information will not be shared.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my permission for my child's email and cell phone number to be shared with other minors and adult leaders who are associated with the activity of this parish organization.

Name of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
Office for Catechetical Formation  
Catechist Orientation Course Form

Catechist Information		
Catechist Name:	Address:	
Catechist Start Date:	Last 4 digits of Social Security Number:	
Parish Name:	Catechist email:	
The Director/Coordinator of Religious Education has reviewed the following with this catechist:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Catechetical Ministry <input type="checkbox"/> Catechist Qualifications and Responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Catechist Annual Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Catechetical Certification of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Vocabulary for Catechists <input type="checkbox"/> Archdiocese of Philadelphia Core Curriculum/Scope and Sequence Charts <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Styles of Children		
This catechist is familiar with the following Archdiocesan and/or Parish Policies:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Access and Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Environment Lessons <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Opt Out Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Photo Release Form <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance and Homework <input type="checkbox"/> Approval for Guest Speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Class/Program cancellation <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication with Staff, Parents, Students <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson Plans <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Parish Resources (multi-media, technology, supplies, books, Prayer table, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Approval for use of outside Resources (DVDs, technology, social media, websites, in particular, YouTube, Apps, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship/Collaboration with Day School teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Reimbursement for supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Student Evaluations/Progress Reports	
This catechist has received training regarding the following Safety/Safe Environment Policies:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended Safe Environment Training (Date) _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> In compliance with all Safe Environment Requirements (see Appendix 18)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrival/Dismissal <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom <input type="checkbox"/> Carpooling/walkers <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip <input type="checkbox"/> Food/Allergy Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Hall Monitors <input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Injury <input type="checkbox"/> Incident Report <input type="checkbox"/> Unattended Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Drill	<input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation of Building <input type="checkbox"/> Lock Down <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter in Place <input type="checkbox"/> Mandated Reporting
The above named catechist has fulfilled the requirements of the Catechist Orientation and earned one credit towards Catechetical Certification.		
DRE signature/Date:		

Revised September, 2016

- Give catechist a copy of this completed form.
- Keep a copy of this completed form on file at parish.
- Send original completed form to:  
 Office for Catechetical Formation  
 Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
 222 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299





OFFICE FOR CHILD AND  
YOUTH PROTECTION

ARCHDIOCESE OF  
PHILADELPHIA

***SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSONS***  
**HOME BASED-CATECHESIS PARENT/GUARDIAN REQUEST TO  
EXCUSE STUDENT**

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia requires students in all Religious Education programs to participate annually in the Safe Environment Child abuse prevention personal safety lesson. Home Based-Catechesis parents/guardians are expected to teach these lessons unless he/she chooses to excuse the child(ren) from these lessons. The lessons can be viewed at <http://phillyocf.org/safe-environment/>

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have received the information

regarding the Safe Environment child abuse prevention lessons. By signing this form I am confirming that I am choosing not to present this lesson to my child(ren).

Name of Child/Children

Level

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

