



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH

June 29, 2020

Solemnity of St.'s Peter and Paul

Dear Pastors, Parochial Administrators, Parents and Directors of Religious Education,

One of the greatest gifts our Father in Heaven gave us is the dignity and respect to be created in His image and likeness. The dignity of the human person reflects an intimate loving relationship between God and His children due to God's unfailing love for us. This gift of love became more significant through God's only begotten son Jesus Christ whose principle aim was the salvation of all humanity from the wages of sin.

Jesus Christ the Word made flesh is the source and summit of our Christian life. In Christ we see the visible reality of God's love through the ultimate sacrifice of the life of Christ for all. Knowing that our identity rests in Christ and serves as our gateway to Heaven the following guidelines and rubric aim to provide a sense of clarity in the religious education formation of your children during this challenging time.

Our principle aim as religious educators is to assist our children develop and intimate and active relationship with Jesus Christ so that they may have the opportunity to witness and see the face of God in Heaven. Thus, the importance of continuing parish religious education instruction by way of proclaiming the Gospel (kerygma) and the teaching of Catholic doctrine (creed) serves as two foundational pillars in the Catholic formation of the faithful.

In order to provide the most fruitful and effective means of transmitting the faith to our children I have provided a specific *Family Catechesis Guide* on how to instruct the faith at home while still utilizing the parish as an advocate for the Catholic development of your child. The following instructional tools lay-out a step by step process on how to implement a whole family religious education process that actively involves both parents and the parish catechetical community at large.

For this process to bear fruit I offer the following suggestions/recommendations:

- With respect to current Texas state COVID-19 regulations and guidelines for social distancing it is recommended that all classrooms be at half of their normal student capacity.
- Appropriate current sanitation measures as outlined by the CDC-Centers for Disease control should be followed unless directed otherwise.
- The distribution of catechetical resources within class should be carefully monitored and limited accordingly. Note: access to printable online resources is a recommended.
- Online-approved parish religious education resource links will be available via the newly revised Diocesan Family Catechesis web page.
- Parish religious education registration would involve either an option for religious instruction at home or the parish. **Note: the parish registration process would require offering this option on a first come first serve basis for those families who desire to**

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have their children participate in a parish religious education setting first versus a home religious education option.

- All children would be catechetically assessed by the parish catechetical staff at the beginning of the parish religious education process to determine the child's active understanding of the faith and a concluding assessment to determine "*readiness*" e.g. does the child know and understand the Catholic faith to the point that he/she can progress in their journey with Christ "active conversion."
- Sacramental Preparation (Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion) would be handled on a case by case basis as follows:
 - Students preparing for reception of any of the sacraments of initiation (other than infant baptism) would require a catechetical assessment to determine the length of time required for religious education for the child to be properly prepared to receive the sacrament of either Confirmation or First Holy Communion.
 - The celebration of each of the sacraments of initiation would be divided into multiple celebrations of the rite (with small cluster groups) either through designated times during the week or weekend as determined by the Pastor and his religious education staff.
 - A request for reception of the sacraments of initiation from a family or individual ***outside of the canonical boundary*** of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth must receive a letter of permission from the diocese and Pastor of the parish associated with the individual in question in order to properly administrate the sacrament in accord with all canonical norms.
 - A request for reception of the sacraments of initiation from a family or individual ***within the canonical boundary*** of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth from a parish they do not normally attend must receive a letter of permission from their Pastor addressed to the Pastor of the parish in question in order to properly administrate the sacrament in accord with all canonical norms.

I offer my sincere prayers and gratitude for all you do in the active formation of your children in the Catholic faith. Know that you are in my continual prayers as we guide our children to develop and intimate and active relationship with Jesus Christ so that they may view the world through a Catholic lens.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at either mdelatorre@fwdioc.org or 817-945-9350.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Marlon De La Torre, MA, MEd, PhD
Department Director for Evangelization and Catechesis

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