

Diocese of St. Augustine
Parish Religious Education Policies

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Philosophy and Vision

The Value Sought: A clear statement of the relationship between the local parish, the diocese, the Church universal and their commitment to building the Kingdom of God.

Diocese of St. Augustine Mission Statement

“We, the Body of Christ of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saint Augustine, strive to know, love and serve God in our world through the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

100 All parish religious education mission statements must reflect both the parish mission statement and the diocesan mission statement.

101 A religious education program mission statement should reflect Diocesan guidelines for catechetical ministry.

102 A religious education program mission statement should reflect current catechetical documents.

200

Catechetical Leadership

The Value Sought: Professional leaders who serve communities with integrity, a firm understanding of the Catholic faith, and a sense of mission.

200 Each parish will have a designated catechetical leader(s) to assist the pastor. A chart describing the levels (DRE, CRE, ARE) of catechetical leadership is found in Appendix I.

201 Parishes seeking to hire a catechetical leader to administer their religious education programs must consult with the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation prior to beginning a search. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #59 C*)

202 The catechetical leader(s) is a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church and models this faith tradition in both words and lifestyle. (*Canon 579*)

203 The catechetical leader(s) will provide proof of a clear background check (through an entity engaged by the Diocese of St. Augustine) and attend a Protecting God's Children class before beginning engagement in the position, and maintain compliance with all safe environment policies.

210 A catechetical leader serves, under the direction of the pastor, as the educational administrator of a religious education program or programs.

211 The catechetical leader will ensure that all materials presented under the auspices of the parish religious education program are in conformity with Catholic Church Teaching. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #68*)

212 The catechetical leader will supervise catechists to ensure that they are covering the Diocesan Universal Curriculum and meet the standard of 211.00 above.

220 Catechetical leaders will meet Diocesan Certification guidelines.

221 A designated catechetical leader will have as a minimum the credentials needed to meet Diocesan standards. Those who do not yet meet their required standard must be working on completing this standard and have a plan in place to do so. These certification guidelines and levels of certification can be found in Appendices II and III.

230 Catechetical leaders will enter into a professional agreement with the parish.

231 Use of the Diocesan professional agreement is required. This document is found in Appendix IV. Signed copies of this agreement are given to the employee, the Diocesan Office of Christian Formation and kept on file in the parish. A job description is part of this professional agreement. A tool for developing a job description is found in Appendix V. Sample job descriptions are available from the Office of Christian Formation. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #54, 5*)

232 A catechetical leader should have a written annual review performed by either the pastor or his delegate. A sample is attached as Appendix VI. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #54, 5*)

233 Catechetical leaders are compensated, at least minimally in accordance with the Diocesan salary process as approved by Bishop Estévez in September, 2021. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #59, C*) This is found in Appendix VII.

234 Women and men religious working in the capacity of parish catechetical leader will be compensated as stated in #233.00

235 Parish catechetical leaders will have access to Diocesan due process procedures. The Office of Dispute Resolution is a function of the Tribunal.

240 Catechetical leaders are required to participate in continuing education and formation.

241 Certified parish catechetical leaders are required to submit to their immediate supervisor a Level III certification form outlining 30 hours of continuing formation every three years. A copy of this form is kept at the parish and one is submitted to the Office of Christian Formation.

242 Parish catechetical leaders are expected to participate in a one-day retreat or other spiritual formation program each year.

243 Parish catechetical leaders professionals and therefore are expected to attend all meetings pertaining to their particular area of ministry that are called by a diocesan office.

250 Parish catechetical leaders are to know and adhere to all safety provisions found in Diocesan policies.

251 Parish catechetical leaders will oversee the training of all catechists concerning all provisions of the Safe Environment Program. (see documentation)

252 Parish catechetical leaders will be certified in first aid, CPR, Epi-Pen usage, and AED, and encourage catechists to be trained as well.

253 Parish catechetical leaders will be trained in how to deal with blood borne pathogens.

300

Catechetical Staff

The Value Sought: Well formed witnesses to the Catholic Faith to live and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ

301 Catechists are fully initiated members of the Catholic faith and model this in word and lifestyle. A check of the requirements for baptismal sponsors might give good guidance here. (Canon 759)

310 All catechists will have a confidential personnel file at the parish.

311 All records pertaining to the service of a catechist, including, but not limited to documentation on certification, Protecting God's Children, background check, continuing formation will be maintained in their personnel file by the catechetical leader.

320 All catechists will meet Diocesan certification standards. Ideally, initial training should occur prior to the beginning of the catechetical ministry.

Level I (beginning catechist) must be completed within first 2 years

Level II (advanced catechist) must be completed within first 5 years.

(National Directory for Catechesis, #55 A-D) Standards document is in Appendix III.

330 All catechists will meet Diocesan instructional standards

331 The catechetical leader will observe the instruction of each catechist in a formal way at least once per year and provide feedback on the observation to the catechist. (a sample form for this is available in the DRE Resource Manual)

340 Every religious education program should sponsor an annual spiritual enrichment activity for its catechists. (e.g., Retreat, Day of Reflection, etc.)

(National Directory for Catechesis, #55, E)

350 No catechist may invite a guest into the catechetical classroom without the expressed consent of the catechetical leader. Even with approval, the guest may need additional clearance and training.

400

Program Structures

Value sought: Good order and a solid foundation in the faith.

400 Parishes will provide religious education programming for all the Christian faithful. (Canon 217)

401 Parishes should provide religious education for every person beginning in pre-school and continuing through the adult years.

402 Religious education models may vary based on local need and the age and number of individuals being served.

- 403 If local needs require the combining of grades, the religious education program will have a written plan which demonstrates that the universal curriculum of the diocese is being covered.
- 404 The standard number of hours for religious education instruction is a minimum of 30 hours per year. This standard excludes immediate preparation for sacraments, Mass attendance and service opportunities.
- 404.1 Every parish will have an attendance policy and a procedure in place for handling absences. Within their local policy, parishes should define acceptable excuses for absences, e.g., illness, death in the family, family crisis.
- 404.2 Excessive absences are defined as 5 class hours or more in any given year or more than 2 class hours in a sacramental year. Procedures need to be in place to assist families in making up missed classes and assignments so as to meet the diocesan curriculum standards.
- 404.3 Parishes need to have a local policy outlining more specifically how they will address excessive absences.
- 405 Each child's progress through the religious education program will be tracked through the maintenance of permanent records. This can be done on paper or on computer via Parish Soft or PDS. Minimum information should include: student name, years in program, book series in use each year child in program.
- 406 Religious education programs will serve the special needs of children/youth of the parish through a determined effort of total inclusion using materials from the *Inclusion and Access* document found in the DRE Resource Manual and on the www.dosaformation.com website. Each parish and school is expected to have at least one person trained through a quality special needs program. The OCF has arranged for scholarship monies for candidates to participate in the University of Dayton Certificate Program.
- 407 If a parish cannot maintain its own religious education program, the Office of Christian Formation will assist the parish in finding other options so that religious education may be offered.

410 Parents are to be actively involved in the religious education of their children. They will be invited, consulted and informed of all major activities involving their children. (Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2225-2226)

- 411 Parents will be informed any time a child is to be taken off church property. The appropriate permission form and medical release form will be on file at the parish. (forms are available on the www.dosaformation.com website and in the DRE Resource Manual.)
- 412 Permission forms and medical releases are for one time use. Each event results in a new set of forms to be signed.

- 420 The registration form for the religious education program will request emergency contact information, including information for an additional adult who would be responsible for the child(ren) in case a parent is not available.**
- 430 Any non-employee (PREP student, catechist, parent, visitor—authorized or unauthorized) who is injured on a diocesan property must be handled in the following manner:**
- A. In case of life-threatening injury or event, an immediate call to 911 and then report to the Risk Management office: Debbie Tauro 904.262.3200 x 131**
- 440 Weapons of any kind are not permitted in religious education classrooms. Parishes are to have a policy and procedure in place to handle this circumstance if it arises.**
- 450 Every parish religious education program should have a drug and alcohol policy.**
- 451 Students with a medical prescription from a registered physician must present information to this effect to the catechetical leader.
- 452 A designated and qualified staff member must give out prescription and non-prescription drugs.
- 453 No child may carry prescription or non-prescription drugs on their person. Inhalers, EpiPens, diabetic items that are needed immediately are exceptions, but require parent permission forms completed annually or whenever the prescription/instruction changes for use.
- 460 Religious education programs will have handbooks which follow the Diocesan Guidelines for Parish Religious Education Handbooks.**
- 461 Parents will be given a copy of the religious education handbook and be asked to review its contents with their children as well as to agree to adhere to the policies contained within the handbook.
- 462 Catechists will either be given the family religious education handbook or one specifically designed for the catechetical staff only.
- 463 An outline for handbooks is in the DRE manual.

Curriculum

The Value Sought: Persons in whom the Word of God has taken root.

500 Religious education programs will teach the specific grade level requirements as defined in the Diocese of St. Augustine *Universal Curriculum* approved by Bishop Felipe J. Estévez (update 2018).

510 Parishes must use textbooks chosen from the USSCB list of approved texts. The initial “P” for parish and student level “CM” for catechist manual must be listed.

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/catechism/conformity-review-list>

511 Schools and religious education programs belonging to the same parish will utilize the same religion textbook series.

511.1 Regional schools and parishes must make every effort to follow this policy.

512 Each parish will have a written plan that identifies the areas of the Diocesan curriculum which are not covered adequately by their particular religion textbook series and develop a plan which outlines how these areas will be covered and in what time frame.

513 Parishes considering a change in textbook should consult with the Office of Christian Formation in order to receive advice and evaluation forms. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #59, C*)

520 Parishes may choose to use an assessment tool such as the NCEA ---ACRE test to measure knowledge of doctrine.

521 It must be made clear to parents that this is a measure of knowledge and not a measure of faith or spirituality, which are impossible to assess. These results become a part of the child’s file. There are other suitable forms of assessing knowledge that could be more helpful.

530 Parishes may choose to use a report card or progress report to notify parents of the progress of their children.

531 It must be made clear to parents that this tool is a measure of knowledge and not a measure of faith or spirituality, which are impossible to assess.

540 All catechetical efforts should incorporate a respect life component. (*National Directory for Catechesis #44*)

- 550 All catechetical programs will provide Safe Environment Programs for children, youth and parents according to the Diocese of St. Augustine chancery directives.
- 560 All religious education programs should include opportunities to discuss and act upon the many social justice issues confronting the world today. This should include direct and indirect service opportunities. (*National Directory for Catechesis #44*)
- 570 Children and youth should have opportunities to prepare and participate in liturgies and prayer services as these are integral parts of faith formation. Examples of these could include: Eucharistic Adoration, Rosary, Stations of the Cross as well as the Mass. (*National Directory for Catechesis #37*)

600

Sacramental Preparation

Value Sought: The integration of knowledge of the faith with how the faith is lived.

- 600 Parishes will follow *the Sacramental Policies for the Reception of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation by School-Aged Children in the Diocese of St. Augustine* approved by Bishop Felipe Estévez on August 21, 2017.
- 601 Each of these sacraments will be celebrated only with those who have been properly prepared, who are actively involved in the parish preparation process, and who freely choose to receive them. (Canon 913 #1)
- 602 Sacraments are celebrations of the believing community. Therefore, immediate preparation and celebration are done in the child/youth's home parish setting.
- 603 There should be a significant period of time (at least two months) between the celebration of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The catechesis for these two sacraments must be done separately. The preparation periods for the two should not overlap in any way. (*National Directory for Catechesis, #126*)
- 604 Parishes must provide opportunities for parents to be intimately involved in the sacramental preparation of their children. A minimum of one parent gathering must be provided.
- 605 Parishes must provide parents with the requirements for the preparation process in a timely and clearly stated manner.
- 610 Children of catechetical age (defined in Canon Law as those over the age of seven) who are unbaptized or baptized in another faith tradition follow the

process for receiving sacraments as outlined in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, National Statutes #18, 19, 30 and 31.

- 620 Children of catechetical age who are baptized Catholic, but uncatechized follow the process for receiving sacraments as outlined in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, National Statutes #18, 19, 30 and 31.
- 630 Children attending a Catholic School which is not in their home parish will prepare for and celebrate the sacraments in their home parish. Exceptions to this requirement can only be made by the child's home pastor. (*Canon #777*)
- 640 It is essential that the most gifted and fully trained catechists prepare children for the sacraments.
- 650 The immediate preparation expectations for each of the sacraments is provided in the DRE Resource Manual and can also be found in the National Directory for Catechesis, #36.
- 660 Confirmation is celebrated with children eighth grade and up in the Diocese of St. Augustine. (Bishop Galeone and Presbyteral Council, 2008)
 - 661 A confirmation retreat is an essential part of the candidate's preparation
 - 662 Parishes are to recommend and/or provide service opportunities for their confirmation candidates based on the needs of the local community.

Additional policy and procedures on the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation are outlined in the "Administering Confirmation in the Diocese of St. Augustine" document mailed to parishes with their confirmation schedule.

- 670 **No grade or age is set for persons who are developmentally delayed to receive sacraments.**
 - 671 Judgment of readiness should balance reverence for the sacrament with each person's need and right to the benefits of the sacrament. (*Canons 912-913*)
 - 672 In cases of doubt about readiness, the presumption of readiness should be made in favor of the person celebrating the sacrament with pastor, parents and catechist in conversation.

Programs for Adult Faith Formation

The Value Sought: Women and men of prayer whose faith is alive, vital and well formed, grounded in a deep commitment to the person and message of Jesus.

- 700 Parish based adult faith formation is an expectation of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, therefore it is also an expectation in the Diocese of St. Augustine. It is a “best practice” that parishes have a written policy for accomplishing this. (*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB #17*)**
- 701 “By virtue of his office, the pastor is bound to provide for the catechetical formation of adults, young people and children...” (Canon 776) therefore, adult faith formation must be seen as being as vital as the formation of children and youth. (*National Directory for Catechesis, # 48A*)
- 710 Parishes will provide faith formation opportunities for adults with adequate resources, both personnel and fiscal, to assure a quality formation in the Gospel for all parishioners. (*Canon 229*)**
- 711 Catechists with appropriate professional formation should be chosen to lead the adult faith formation efforts in the parish.
- 712 Catechists who minister to the adult population should be aware of the needs of adult learners and be adequately prepared to find ways to meet these needs. (*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB, #82*)
- 713 Facilities used for adult faith formation should be suitable to the adult learner.
- 714 Parishes should identify one suitable and trained leader to lead its adult faith formation leader for the parish. (*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB, #142-144*)
- 715 Each parish should have an Adult Faith Formation team in each parish. (*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB, #125*)
- 716 Adult faith formation opportunities must be funded adequately. (*National Directory for Catechesis #60A*)

These could include: Bible studies, parish missions, seasonal offerings

720 Adult Faith Formation opportunities must be designed to serve the needs and interests of the entire faith community. (*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB, #80*)

721 Adult faith formation opportunities should revolve around the six tasks of catechesis. (*National Directory for Catechesis, USCCB, #20, 1-6 and Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, USCCB, #88-96*)

722 Adult Catechesis should respect the experiences of adults and make use of their personal experiences, talents and skills. (*National Directory for Catechesis, USCCB, #48, A4*)

733 Adult learners should have a voice in the planning of catechetical efforts made on their behalf. (*National Directory for Catechesis, USCCB, #48, A4*)

800

Resources and Environment

The Value Sought: Adequate and safe facilities with appropriate funding so as to promote faith formation at all levels within the parish.

800 Parishes will provide religious education programs with adequate resources, both personnel and fiscal, to assure a quality formation in the Gospel for all parishioners. (*Canon 229*)

801 Parishes will provide catechists with materials for effective and quality programming.

802 Parish religious education programs will have access to secretarial support.

803 Parish religious education programs will have access to adequate business machines (copiers, computers, etc.) to run the program.

804 Parish educational facilities will be equipped with essential educational equipment such as TV/VCR/DVD, flipcharts, etc.

805 Parishes will provide a safe environment for all religious education programs.

810 Parish religious education programs will have a budget.

820 Parish facilities will strictly adhere to local child safety and welfare regulations.

821 Children will be supervised at all times during religious education classes.

830 Any suspicion of abuse or neglect of any sort must be reported to the proper authority.

Call the toll free Florida Abuse Department of Children & Families

<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline/report-online.shtml>

Provide information to immediate supervisor and pastor.

840 Parish religious education programs must ensure that the children of the program are released to the custody of those people who are approved by the legal guardian(s).

841 An adequate and safe dismissal plan will be in place in each location.

850 The parish religious education program will provide a safety plan for emergencies such as tornadoes, intruders, evacuations, etc.

851 This plan should be posted in every classroom and contained in the program handbook.

852 This plan will be communicated to the parents of the children as well as practiced with the children so that they are aware of safety procedures.

860 Visitors cannot enter into the religious education classroom except those who are expressly invited by the pastor or catechetical leader. Additional safe environment clearance might be necessary.

870 Visible signs of our Catholic Tradition will be present in classrooms and throughout the parish educational spaces. (National Directory for Catechesis #37-38)

871 A crucifix should be visible in each classroom.

872 Classroom space should be allotted for a prayer table containing a copy of the Sacred Scriptures.

900

Relationships

Value Sought: Open communication among all with a vested interest in religious education programs.

900 Parents are the primary educators of their children; therefore, parents will be informed of all activities of the religious education program that affect their children.

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

910 Families who choose to home school their children must register with the parish and be in communication with the pastor and/or his delegate for religious education. (Canons 773, 774, #1-2 stipulate that the religious education of children and youth is the responsibility of parents, pastors and the local community.)

911 Home school families are defined as those families who provide education, including religious faith formation, in their homes following a standardized curriculum. Families who seek to use the parish program for religious education only when it is convenient with the scheduling of secular activities are not covered in this definition of home school family.

912 Parishes must make every effort to provide catechetical training or materials that home school families need when requests are reasonable.

913 Families who home school are obligated to use the same religious education text as the parish religious education program during the sacramental years. Parishes need to make these available to the families in the same way they are made available to children who attend classes at the parish. It is recommended that only religion texts found to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church by the USCCB be used by home school families in all other years.

914 The pastor or his delegate for religious education should require a periodic progress report to be made by home school parents.

(Please see chancery policy on the use of facilities by home school families)

920 Parishes need to have procedures and policies in place to ascertain that children who are not regularly enrolled in the parish religious education program are being adequately formed. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that the parish is the privileged place for the catechesis of children and adults (CCC #2226)

930 Confidentiality should be strictly observed in matters concerning students, their families and other staff members. (Canon 220)

Approved September 12, 2019
Bishop Felipe Estévez

Diocese of St. Augustine
Job Descriptions by Competencies
(source: National Directory for Catechesis)

Job Title	Director of Religious Education (DRE)	Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE)	Administrator Of Religious Education (ARE)
Job Description	Designs, develops, implements, and evaluates the <u>total</u> parish catechetical ministry.	Implements, coordinates and evaluates <u>an area</u> of a parish catechetical ministry.	Administers an already existing program.
Educational Preparation	Appropriate <u>Masters Degree</u> and at least 5 years experience in catechetical leadership.	Appropriate <u>Bachelors Degree</u> or approved equivalency. (Ministry Formation Program)	High School diploma and <u>5 years of experience</u> as a parish catechist.
Competencies	Knowledge of National Catechetical Directory (NCD) and church documents.	Knowledge of NCD and recent church catechetical documents.	Awareness of NCD and recent church catechetical documents.
	Appropriate knowledge of theology and Scripture.	Appropriate knowledge of theology and Scripture.	Appropriate awareness of doctrine and Scripture.
	Knowledge of catechetical and developmental theory for all ages.	Knowledge of catechetical and developmental theory for all ages.	
	Knowledge of Diocesan Catechist Certification process.	Knowledge of Diocesan Catechist Certification process.	Completion of Diocesan Certification process.
	Skills in personnel recruitment, program planning, educational methods, and in educational design.	Skills in personnel recruitment, program planning, and education methods for a specified area of catechetical ministry.	Skills in scheduling, purchasing, providing resources, and support for catechists.
	Skills in assessing and evaluating the total parish catechetical ministry.		Assists in personnel recruitment.



**CATECHETICAL CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES
DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE**

Elementary Teachers and Catechists

1. All **elementary school** (grades K -8)catechists, regardless of what subject(s) they teach, are required to complete Basic Catechist Certification within two (2) years of engagement or employment, if they are employed three (3) or more days a week in a Catholic school.
2. All lead teachers in a Diocesan Early Childhood Center, who teach 4- and 5-year-olds, are required to complete Basic Catechist Certification within 2 years of employment. It is strongly recommended that all staff attain Basic certification within a 2-year period of employment.
3. All Catechists in a Diocesan Catholic **school or parish** setting who teach religion, even if they work as part-time catechists or are volunteer catechists, must complete Basic and Standard certification. The Basic certificate should be earned within the first two (2) years of engagement. The Catechist should complete Standard certification within (5) years.
4. A Catholic School Teacher who is primarily a middle school religion teacher, defined as teaching three (3) or more classes of religion per day, is obligated to the standards found below in the section marked “High School Teachers and Catechists.”
5. All **school or parish** Catechists, after the completion of their required level, maintain their certification by completing 30 hours of continuing faith formation to be submitted every three (3) years to the Office of Christian Formation. (OCF)
6. Each **school’s Catechist Certification Coordinator** should:
 - Explain in detail the Diocesan Catechist Certification guidelines to new Catechists as well as remind others of the requirements as needed.
 - Distribute the appropriate level personal record form to each new teacher at the beginning of the academic year.
 - Make known opportunities being offered throughout the diocese and maintain records of completion. Opportunities can be found on the www.dosaformation.com website or listed on the weekly *Echoes*, published by the OCF.
 - Suggest appropriate in-service topics to the school principal.

7. Each **parish's DRE/CRE** should:

- Should maintain a record in the parish offices on each of the Catechists.
- Explain the diocesan Catechist Certification guidelines in detail to new Catechists, as well as explain to others the requirements as needed. While it is the Catechist's job to fulfill these requirements, the DRE/CRE should make known opportunities being offered throughout the diocese and maintain records of completion. Opportunities can be found on the www.dosaformation.com website or listed on the weekly *Echoes*, published by the OCF.

8. Catechist Certification **Documentation** Requirements:

- Follow guidelines for completing the Catechist Certification Program Personal Record of Courses for each certification level from the Office of Christian Formation. [See website: www.dosaformation.com]
- The Catechist should keep Course Completion/Attendance Forms until a level is completed, turning in the documentation (certificates of attendance with summaries of the courses) to the School Catechist Coordinator or DRE/CRE.
- When a certification level is completed, the
 - a. School Catechist Coordinator should complete the appropriate form and review the Catechist's documentation. The Coordinator submits the completed form to the school principal for final approval.
 - b. The Parish DRE/CRE should complete the required form and review the Catechist's documentation.
- Completed (including signature of principal or DRE/CRE as local representative) forms with documentation are sent to the Office of Christian Formation.
- After diocesan approval, a copy of the certificate provided by the diocesan office should remain in the Catechist's personnel file at the parish or school along with the documentation, now countersigned by the diocesan official. The original certificate should be given to the Catechist.

9. **Course Completion/Attendance Forms** for each Catechist Certification Level should include the following details:

- instructor's name
- his/her signature (or principal/DRE/CRE signature if the instructor is unavailable to sign) • date(s) of the course
- number of hours of instruction
- a short summary of the topic

The Catechist should keep Course Completion/Attendance Forms until a level is completed.

Undergraduate or graduate courses in theology or related religion coursework from a Catholic institution completed within the last fifteen (15) years may satisfy a course area requirement. In these cases, the college transcript will serve as documentation. These can be submitted to the OCF for evaluation and approval.

10. **Basic Catechist (previously Level I) courses:**

Role of the Catechist:	An overview of effective ways for Catechists to share the Gospel with students and families
Practical Skills:	An exploration of the best methods for developing knowledge of the Faith in students
Scripture:	An overview of both the Old and New Testaments with application for daily life
Church:	An overview of the Church with an emphasis on the documents of Vatican II
Liturgy & Sacraments:	An overview of the sacramental life of the Church and examines communal and personal prayer. Formerly known as Prayer: Personal/ Liturgical
Basic Beliefs:	An overview of the whole Creed and an in-depth examination of a specific area professed in the Creed
Faith Development:	An examination of the stages of both moral and faith development
Administrative/Legal:	An overview of the various legal and ethical concerns of Church ministers today. Also known as Catechetical/ Legal or Catechetical/Legal/Administrative

Attached is a more detailed set of objectives for each course. There are pre-reading assignments for each of these classes. Principals and DREs are expected to maintain sets of these and provide them to their staffs in time for them to prepare the readings for the class sessions.

11. **Standard Catechist Certification (formerly Level II)** course information is available through the Office of Christian Formation. The Searchlight Virtual School, or the Satellite Theological Education program (STEP) course package from Notre Dame University designed for the Diocese of St. Augustine are viable options to complete Standard certification.

Ten (10) hours of in-depth instruction in each of the following content areas completes this level:

Scripture, Church History, Morality, Sacraments, Prayer, and Basic Beliefs. Objectives for each course are available on the www.dosaformation.com website. Workshops/Classes for completion of both Levels I and III will be offered by the Office of Christian Formation quarterly.

12. **Continuing Certification (formerly Level III)** is a continuing professional development component to help the catechist maintain his/her current level of certification. Every three (3) years, a catechist, principal, DRE/CRE/Diocesan Formation staff member must submit a record of thirty (30) hours of formation in the Catholic faith. While personal enrichment is important, it is indeed personal. Professional continuing formation increases one's knowledge of the Catholic Faith and gives better skills in imparting that faith and sharing the Gospel more effectively. Suggestions would be: workshops, online classes, Catechism Studies, approved Bible studies. More suggestions on fulfilling this obligation can be obtained from the Office of Christian Formation or by reading the Echoes newsletter.
13. **Advanced Catechist Certification (formerly Level IV)** is achieved in one of the following ways: completion of the Diocese of St. Augustine Ministry Formation Program or by obtaining a Bachelor's degree from an accredited Catholic institution in the area of theology, religious education, or pastoral ministry.
14. **Professional Catechist Certification (formerly Level V)** is achieved by earning a Master's degree from an accredited Catholic institution in the area of theology, religious education, or pastoral ministry.
15. **Presenters of ...**
- **Basic Certification** theology courses must possess a B.A. in Religious Education or Theology from an accredited Catholic institution or be graduates of the Ministry Formation Program (MFP).
 - **Standard Certification** courses must possess an M.A. in Religious Education or Theology from an accredited Catholic institution or be a member of the ordained clergy. Consecrated religious, who have equivalency of credentials, would also be suitable presenters.
 - **Continuing formation opportunities** should be presented by those who possess the same qualifications as someone who would present Basic or Standard Certification. Exceptions for this should be presented to the Office of Christian Formation for review prior to the catechetical event.

High School Teachers and Catechists (middle school specialists)

All **Catholic High School teachers**, regardless of what subject they teach, must complete Basic Certification within the first two years of employment. After Basic Certification is completed, they go directly to the continuing formation level.

A religion teacher or campus minister in a Catholic high school or parish in the Diocese of St. Augustine must be a practicing Catholic and in good standing in the Church and must be qualified in the following manner:

- Must have a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Theology, Religion, Religious Studies, or Theological Studies from a Catholic college or university; if not a certified teacher in these areas, the teacher must be endorsed by the Bishop at the recommendation of the Principal and pastor (if applicable) and complete requirements in professional education study approved by the Principal. The religion teacher then must complete at least 30 hours of approved professional development in the area of religious studies every three (3) years henceforth;

OR,

- Must complete the Ministry Formation Program of the Diocese of St. Augustine or another comparable Ministry Program approved by the Office of Christian Formation. The religion teacher then must complete at least 30 hours of approved professional development every three (3) years henceforth (in development related to teaching religion) which can be a portion of the usual certification renewal of Master-In-Service program every five (5) years.

OR,

- Must have at least 12 hours of graduate credits in Theology, Religion, Religious Studies, or Theological Studies from a Catholic college or university and be certified by the State in another academic field and be endorsed by the Bishop at the recommendation of the Principal and pastor (if applicable). The subject areas are to be approved through the Office of Christian Formation to match the area (s) that the person will be asked to teach. The religion teacher then must complete at least 30 hours of approved professional development every three (3) years henceforth (in development related to teaching religion) which can be a portion of the usual certification renewal or Master-In-Service program every five (5) years;

All high school catechists, after the completion of their required level, maintain their certification by completing 30 hours of continuing faith formation to be submitted every three (3) years to the Office of Christian Formation. (OCF).

Adult Faith Formation, RCIA Catechists, and Youth Ministers

A presenter in an adult faith formation program, an RCIA program, or a youth ministry program should be minimally a graduate of the Ministry Formation Program or ideally possess at least a bachelor's degree in theological studies or religious education from a Catholic college or university.

Updated August, 2020 Bishop Felipe Estévez

Appendix III

Levels for Certification in the Diocese of St. Augustine

Level I	Basic Certification (beginning catechist)	20 hours
Level II	Advanced Certification (standard for all catechists)	60 hours
Level III	Continuing Certification	30 hours/every three years
Level IV	Standard Certification (minimum standard for DRE) Ministry Formation Certificate or a Bachelor's degree in Catholic theology, Religious Education or Pastoral Ministry	
Level V	Professional Certification (standard for DRE) Masters' degree or higher in Catholic theology, Theological Studies, Religious Education or Pastoral Ministry	

Approved May 2, 2016
Bishop Felipe Estévez

**Employment Agreement
Diocese of St. Augustine**

DRE (Director of Religious Education)
CRE (Coordinator of Religious Education)
ARE (Administrator of Religious Education)

THIS AGREEMENT is made on this _____ day of _____, 201____, by and between _____ CATHOLIC CHURCH, (hereafter “Parish”) and _____ (hereafter “Employee”).

I. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

1.1 Status. Employee is being hired as an “at will” employee and not for a definite term. The start date of this agreement is _____, 20____.

1.2 Job Description. The Employee being hired by the Parish is to fulfill the position of (CIRCLE ONE) DRE / CRE / ARE as described in Chart A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. This supplement sets forth a minimum standard for the job description. The full job description is also attached. The Employee shall perform such other catechetical duties as may be required from time to time by the Pastor for the position contemplated herein.

1.3 General. The Parish is under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of St. Augustine. Felipe Estévez is currently the Bishop of this Catholic Diocese and in accordance with canon law, he is, and his successors are, recognized as chief pastor of all parishes within the Diocese of St. Augustine. His authority and teaching responsibility is plenary.

1.4 An introductory period will be in effect for ninety (90) days, during which time, either party to this agreement may terminate the agreement for any reason.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEE:

2.1 Employee agrees to render the services required under this agreement for the job description (as set forth in 1.2 above and attached) and to be subject at all times to the general authority and supervision of the Pastor

of the Parish. The parties agree that the Employee's services must be performed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Pastor of the Parish.

2.2 Employee shall:

- (a) carry out the policy, philosophy, and objectives as established by the Pastor of the Parish and the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine in accord with the Magisterium of the Church;
- (b) give full and loyal support to the Diocesan Offices that are established for the supervision of the ministry contemplated by this agreement;
- (c) fulfill the duties inherent in the Job Description above and attached;
- (d) strive to become more competent by furthering professional and spiritual growth through participation in those programs sponsored by the Diocese and other programs recommended by the Pastor;
- (e) conduct all programs in full compliance with applicable state and federal laws;
- (f) support and exemplify in conduct and/or instruction both Catholic doctrine and morality;

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARISH:

3.1 Parish agrees to provide personal benefits as described below or attached and incorporated herein by reference.

_____ week (s) of vacation per year

_____ personal day (s) per year

_____ sick day (s) per year

3.2 Compensation. For the services rendered by the Employee under this agreement, Parish agrees to pay compensation in the amount of \$_____.

IV. TERMINATION AND RENEWAL:

4.1 Renewal/non-renewal. If either party does not wish to renew this agreement, notice in writing shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior to the departure of the employee. If the parties desire to renew the agreement, either a new agreement shall be signed, or a written memorandum shall be signed by both parties.

4.2 Termination for Cause. In the event the Parish is not satisfied with the performance of the Employee for any reason (specifically including conduct, morally or ethically deficient or detrimental to the religious doctrines and tenets of the Catholic Church), then the Parish may terminate this agreement. If the Employee believes the termination is unjust, an appeal may be made to the Diocesan Office of Dispute Resolution.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the parties have signed this agreement at _____, Florida on the day and year first written above.

Diocese of St. Augustine

By:

Pastor

By:

Employee

(Copies of this agreement are to be retained by the Employee,
the Pastor, and the Diocesan Office of Religious Education.)

Approved September 12, 2017

Bishop Felipe Estévez

Guidelines for Developing a Job Description

This information can be used by the pastor or hiring committee/board in developing a job description for a catechetical leader. It is a good idea to involve the person or people who may ultimately hold a position in the development of a job description for that particular position. This may also help maximize that person's effectiveness in the position.

The focus of a job description should be on the desired results. Thus, the focus of a record keeping responsibility can be addressed it as statement as follows, "Maintain adequate records for those enrolled in the program," rather than focusing on the activity itself, "Make records for those enrolled in the program."

It can be helpful to list the responsibilities of the position in order of their importance, or in the order in which they will command time of the professional. Here are some questions to consider:

- † What are the key responsibilities of the position?
- † What are the goals expected for the tasks of these responsibilities?
- † What individuals/resources/space will be required to accomplish these tasks?
- † Will the position require the professional to recruit individuals or acquire and maintain resources and space needed for the tasks?
- † Will the position require training of volunteers? How many? Is there a minimum standard for time, content, etc.?

A position may require collaboration with other parish professionals, or the supervision of other staff members. Here are some questions to consider:

- † What are the general areas of collaboration that can be foreseen at the time of writing the job description?
- † Who is responsible for initiating the collaborative efforts? Who will be responsible for the results of the collaboration?
- † How many staff members are to be supervised? What interaction will be required of the supervisor?

Each catechetical leader is inevitably responsible to the pastor. Here are some questions to consider:

- † How often will the professional be required to update the pastor?
- † Is there specific information the professional will be required to provide the pastor with on a regular basis?
- † In what areas might the professional be asked to serve as a resource person to the pastor?

A catechetical leader, regardless of their personal educational and professional background, needs continual updating in the theory and practice of church ministry and networking with other professionals in other parishes and in the Diocese of St. Augustine, in order to serve in the most effective manner. Here are some questions to consider:

- † Are there groups of professionals in the Diocese within which the professional may find professional support?
- † Are there professional associations to which the professional should have membership at the expense of the parish?

A professional will work within Diocesan and Parish structures of leadership:

- † Are there parish committees that require the membership of the professional?
- † Are there diocesan meetings that require the professional to attend?

A job description should be realistic. It should not be developed as an ideal in mind to which a professional can work towards, but rather something within the time agreed to by the parish and the professional.

Job descriptions should be reviewed annually during the evaluation process.

Approved September 12, 2017
Bishop Felipe Estévez

To be completed by the catechetical leader & the pastor

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

TITLE _____

PARISH _____

Signature of Catechetical Leader Date

Signature of Pastor Date

Indicate your overall rating of the performance rendered by this professional using the following scale:
4 = Excellent; 3 = Very Good; 2 = Good; 1 = Needs Improvement
If a number 1 was selected, please explain in the comments section.

Pastor CL Program Development

- _____ _____ Develops and maintains catechetical programs.
- _____ _____ Reviews, selects and acquires suitable materials for catechetical programs.
- _____ _____ Develops curriculum in keeping with the guidelines of the diocese and the National Directory for Catechesis.
- _____ _____ Works collaboratively with other parish ministries to ensure an integrated approach to the parish's catechetical efforts.
- _____ _____ Works with parents to ensure their support and involvement in the parish's catechetical program.

COMMENTS:

Pastor CL Recruitment and Training of Volunteer Personnel

- _____ _____ Recruits sufficient volunteers and aides to conduct the parish's catechetical program.
- _____ _____ Provides regular in-services to train volunteers in basic theology & the methods of catechesis.
- _____ _____ Encourages volunteer catechists to obtain diocesan certification and supports them in this effort.
- _____ _____ Provides periodic spiritual enrichment and community building experiences (evenings of reflection, appreciation dinner, etc.)
- _____ _____ Offers constructive suggestions for improvement to catechists, as needed throughout the year.

COMMENTS:

Pastor CL Administration

- _____ Supervises religious education office staff and volunteers.
- _____ Develops a comprehensive calendar of all aspects of the catechetical program and coordinates this with the parish’s master calendar.
- _____ Prepares an annual budget and oversees expenditures after its approval.
- _____ Arranges for use of the facilities needed to conduct the catechetical program and oversees the proper use and maintenance of these facilities.
- _____ Maintains necessary records so indicated by the diocese.
(Adult background checks, Protecting God’s Children training, instruction of minors and parents)
- _____ Maintains accurate child records related to registration, attendance and evaluations, as well as any required documentation related to sacramental preparation and celebration.

COMMENTS:

Pastor CL Communication

- _____ Attends parish staff meetings; updates members regularly on matters pertaining to the catechetical program.
- _____ Informs parents in a timely manner of program events and policies: registrations, fee/tuition policy, sacramental preparation schedule and policies, parent meetings, enrichment opportunities, etc.
- _____ Serves as staff representative to the parish religious education committee; submits reports as requested.
- _____ Maintains regular contact with diocesan agencies and local cluster structures in order to stay informed of policies and programs.
- _____ Demonstrates pastoral attitudes when working with students, parents, catechists and other parish ministers.

COMMENTS:

Pastor CL Continuing Education and Professional Development

- _____ Continues personal and spiritual formation through retreats, days of reflection, reading, small-faith-sharing groups, Scripture study, workshops, prayer and other such experiences.
- _____ Continues professional growth and formation through reading, peer associations and networks, institutes and workshops, classes, study days, offered by the diocese and otherwise.

COMMENTS:

Approved September 12, 2019
Bishop Felipe Estévez

Appendix VII

Diocese of St. Augustine Compensation Guidelines for Directors, Coordinators, and Administrators of Religious Education Programs

Components to be included in determining compensation:

Education (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> 15 undergraduate credits in education	5
<input type="checkbox"/> 15 undergraduate credits in religious studies*	6
<input type="checkbox"/> 30 undergraduate credits in religious studies (MFP)	7
<input type="checkbox"/> BA in area other than education or religious studies	5
<input type="checkbox"/> BA in religious studies	10
<input type="checkbox"/> BA in religious studies and 18 graduate credits	13
<input type="checkbox"/> Masters in religious studies	15
<input type="checkbox"/> Masters in religious studies and 15 graduate credits	17
<input type="checkbox"/> Masters in religious studies and 30 graduate credits	20

* "Religious studies" also implies the phrase "or related fields," such as religious education or theology.

Experience (Years of experience in religious education as a full time D/C/ARE in Diocese of St. Augustine or equivalent in another diocese)

<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 Years	3
<input type="checkbox"/> 4-7 Years	7
<input type="checkbox"/> 8-10 Years	10
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 Years	12

Job Responsibilities (Check as many as apply)

Please refer to Suggested Process Guidelines, Section A, Program Responsibilities

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K through 6 th Grade Catechesis	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior High Catechesis	3
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Catechesis	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacramental Preparation Programs (catechesis for children and parents)	3
<input type="checkbox"/> RCIA	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Religion Resource Person for Catholic School	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, Orientation, Evaluation of Catechists/Volunteers	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Catechetical responsibilities: add 3 points for each	

Number of Students in Program

<input type="checkbox"/> Fewer than 50	3
<input type="checkbox"/> 50-199	5
<input type="checkbox"/> 200-399	7
<input type="checkbox"/> 400-599	10
<input type="checkbox"/> 600-999	13
<input type="checkbox"/> 1,000-1,499	16
<input type="checkbox"/> 1,500-1,999	19
<input type="checkbox"/> Over 2,000	24

Section Subtotals

- Education
- Experience
- Responsibilities
- Students

Total Points

Applicant Name _____

**Diocese of St. Augustine
Compensation Recommendations for Directors, Coordinators,
and Administrators of Religious Education Programs**

<u>Points Accumulated</u>	<u>Salary Range</u>
<u>< 15</u>	Below \$12,000 depending on responsibilities in parish
<u>16-20</u>	\$12,001 - 16,000
<u>21-30</u>	\$16,001 – 20,000
<u>31-40</u>	\$20,001 – 26,000
<u>41-50</u>	\$26,001 – 33,000
<u>51-60</u>	\$33,001 – 39,000
<u>61-70</u>	\$39,001 – 46,000
<u>71-80</u>	\$46,001 – 54,000

Approved for use in the Diocese of St. Augustine September 15, 2021
Bishop Felipe Estévez



DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE
OFFICE OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION

ENDORSEMENT FOR DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR/ADMINISTRATOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

To: _____

From: _____

Parish: _____

Regarding: _____

_____ has my endorsement and support as _____ at
_____ Parish. He/she has _____ years of related
experience.

Additionally, he/she holds the following degree(s) and/or certificate:

Bachelor's

Master's

PhD

Certificate

College/University/Program _____

Major _____

Sincerely,

Approval of the Pastor - Signature

Date

Approval of Director of Christian Formation - Signature

Date

Approval of the Bishop - Signature

Date