

Profiles of Catechetical Leaders

*Christians, in the most diverse social situations,
perceive the world with the same eyes
with which Jesus contemplated the society of His time.
The disciple of Jesus Christ deeply shares
the joys and hopes, the sadness and the anxieties,
of people today.
The disciple gazes upon human history
and participates in it,
not only from the standpoint of reason
but also from that of faith.*

*In the light of faith the world appears
at once created and sustained by the love of the Creator
and freed from the slavery of sin
by Christ, who was crucified and rose.*

*The Christian knows that every human event –
indeed all reality – is marked by:*

- *God's creative activity communicating goodness to all beings;*
- *the power of sin which limits and numbs man;*
- *the dynamism bursting forth from the Resurrection of Christ*

*By means of catechesis,
the Church desires to stir Christian hearts to the cause of justice
and to a preferential option or love for the poor, so that her
presence may really be light that shines and salt that cures.
(GDC 16 – 17)*

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Personal Characteristics Indicative of a Call to Catechetical Ministry (GDC 142)

Understanding of:

- one's gifts, personality, strengths, talents, weaknesses, and limitations and how they impact one's ministry.
- one's own emotional, physical, and spiritual limitations.
- the need for lifelong faith formation and education to grow as a person and as a professional minister.
- the complexities of daily life and ministry.
- the need for an integrated spirituality based on prayer, reflection, and liturgical participation grounded in the ecclesiology of Vatican II.
- commitment to ministry which builds on and expands one's baptismal call to ongoing personal conversion.
- the ways in which God is active in one's ministry.
- the need for compassion and justice in ministerial activities.
- Church structures: local, diocesan, regional, and global.

Ability to:

- engage in self-reflection and access one's abilities accurately.
- set healthy and responsible boundaries, and maintain a healthy balance in one's personal life and ministry.
- develop and commit to a plan for continuing personal and professional education and formation.
- be flexible and assign appropriate life-giving priorities in varied circumstances.
- participate in ongoing spiritual formation, e.g., prayer, retreats, spiritual direction, community workshop.
- develop a commitment to leadership in ministry as a lifestyle.
- articulate one's personal faith with others: colleagues, staff, catechists, etc.
- model and apply justice and charity in dealing with people, developing programs, selecting materials, etc.
- minister effectively in relationship to the larger church community and its structures.

National Certification Standards for Professional Parish Directors of Religious Education #510.01 to 510.10, approved by the USCC Commission on Certification and Accreditation. Used with permission.

Faith Qualities Essential for the Catechetical Ministry (GDC 53-57)

Only men and women of faith can share faith with others, preparing the setting within which people can respond in faith to God's grace. (Sharing the Light of Faith #207)

Called by God

The Director/Coordinator receives and responds to a call which comes from the Lord and is articulated in the local Church.

The response to this call includes the willingness to give time and talent not only to catechizing others but also to furthering one's own growth in faith.

The Director/Coordinator is able to articulate this call as well as his/her commitment to the ministry of catechetical leadership

Grounded in the Lord

The Director/Coordinator is committed to Jesus Christ and lives in an ever-deepening relationship with Him. It is from this relationship, that the ministry of the Director/Coordinator flows (GDC 81).

The Director/Coordinator believes in the Gospel and in its power to transform lives, and frequently reflects on and prays with the Scriptures.

Faithful to the Church

The Director/Coordinator demonstrates a fidelity to the official teachings of the Catholic Church and realizes that, in the exercise of the catechetical ministry, it is the Church that is represented.

The Director/Coordinator tests and validates personal understanding and insights in the light of the Gospel message as presented by the teaching authority of the Church.

The Director/Coordinator is aware that, as a pilgrim people, the Church is in constant need of renewal, and strives therefore to discern the Spirit's presence ever at work in the Church community (GDC 32).

Committed to Community

The Director/Coordinator appreciates the Eucharist as the deepest sign of community and the cause of its growth, and participates frequently in its celebration with other members of the catechetical community.

The Director/Coordinator sees and promotes the parish as the focal point of community in the Church.

The Director/Coordinator has learned the meaning of Christian community by experiencing it and fosters relationships within the catechetical community through:

- shared prayer, shared ministerial goals, and shared faith-values,
- the acceptance of individual strengths and weaknesses,
- discussion, recreation, and working together,
- conflict handled as a source of growth,
- Christian reconciliation.

Oriented to Mission

The Directors/Coordinator holds inviolate the dignity of each human person and continually works for this dignity – witnessing through personal attitudes and actions and infusing the entire catechetical program with the social teachings of the Church (*GDC 17-19*).

Profiles of Catechetical Leaders

The Archdiocese of New York formally recognizes two positions of parish catechetical leadership under the authority of the Pastor, who is the parish's primary catechetical leader. These positions are: the Director of Religious Education and the Coordinator of Religious Education.

Requirements to Become a Director of Religious Education

The Director of Religious Education has a master's degree in an appropriate field such as religious education, religious studies, theology, or a master's in any field plus 24 graduate credits in religious education or a related field.

A person with a master's degree in education can become a Director of Religious Education by completing the Advanced Leadership Formation offered by the Catechetical Office. The content of the 5 theology courses may be taken from other Catholic Institutions which give the course material in equivalent content and hours.

Once hired, the Director is required to take the Basic Leadership Training Course for all Directors/Coordinators new to the Archdiocese. Upon completion of the Basic Leadership Training Course, the Director should be competent to develop, to teach and to supervise all aspects of total parish catechesis.

Requirements to Become a Coordinator of Religious Education

A pre-requisite for serving as Coordinator of Religious Education is the completion of the Catechist Formation Program, Levels 1 and 2. It is highly recommended that the Coordinator of Religious Education hold a Bachelor's degree. The Coordinator does not have a master's degree in a field such as religious education, religious studies, or theology.

Once hired, the Coordinator is required to take the Basic Leadership Training Course for all Directors/Coordinators new to the Archdiocese. Upon completion of the Basic Leadership Training Course, the Coordinator should complete the Advanced Leadership Formation. The Coordinator should then be competent to administer sections of the total parish catechetical program, according to ability and training.

Competencies of the Director of Religious Education

Theological and Catechetical Competencies (GDC 36 – 46)

- Ability to present and explain the official teachings of the Catholic Church coupled with a demonstrated fidelity to these teachings.
- Ability to encourage, assist and challenge Catechists and other adults to grow and mature in their Catholic Faith.
- Ability to develop the total parish program in light of teachings reflective of the Church Documents (GDC 27 – 28).
- Ability to use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as a primary teaching resource.
- Ability to recognize the elements in culture and society which lend understanding to the Church's teachings and incorporate those elements into the religious education program; ability to challenge those elements which contradict the Gospel message (GDC 193 - 194).
- Ability to explain the catechetical ministry and its importance in the Church today and to present the catechetical leader's role and responsibilities in carrying out the mission of the parish.
- Ability to recognize what in today's society supports Catholic values and to provide ongoing evangelizing Catechesis to adults as well as youth and children (GDC 26).
- Ability to discern in expressions of "popular piety" both the desirable qualities that resonate with true faith and the aspects that can lead to error, and then to direct it wisely (GDC 195 – 196).
- Ability to complete Basic Leadership Training offered by the Catechetical Office and to advance continually in the educational content outlined in Church documents such as *The Catechetical Leader in the Third Millenium*.

Competencies for Catechist Formation (GDC 233 – 236)

- Ability to communicate with others in a way that invites their support for and participation in the catechetical ministry as the responsibility of all the members of the parish community (GDC 220).
- Ability to recruit, interview and screen candidates, and select those with the potential to be good Catechists (GDC 221).
- Ability to discern and call forth the gifts and talents of Catechists.
- Ability to insure the formation of Catechists according to the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program (GDC 234).
- Ability to provide Catechist formation, not only for those at beginning stages, but also for those already certified (GDC 238).
- Ability to supervise Catechists in catechetical content and methodology, as well as in the management of religious education sessions.
- Ability to give Catechists the instruction and formation which supervision has shown is necessary.
- Ability to support Catechists and to facilitate the development of a faith community among the Catechists and staff (GDC 238).
- Ability to manage personnel, to evaluate, to challenge inappropriate behavior/performance, to call for correction, and to dismiss when necessary.

Competences for Program Development

- Ability to inspire and implement a parish vision of catechesis based upon the catechetical documents of the Church (*GDC 257*).
- Ability to conduct needs assessments to ascertain the catechetical needs of the parishioners.
- Ability to facilitate the planning of long-term and short-term goals and objectives for various segments of the parish religious education program.
- Ability to select, adapt, facilitate the use of, and supplement catechetical texts and resources according to Church documents, the USCCB Protocol, archdiocesan directives and the needs of the parish.
- Ability to use contemporary technology to promote catechesis.
- Ability to discern and address the influences that media has on society and the formation of the individual (*GDC 209*).
- Ability to integrate into the curriculum of the Religious Education Program the social justice teachings of the Church in such a way as to motivate to action (*GDC 17 - 19*).
- Ability to make use of the resources of other archdiocesan and community services to augment program development.
- Ability to devise procedures and tools for the effective evaluation of each component of the total religious education program.
- Ability to integrate into the Religious Education Program the ***Six Fundamental Tasks of Catechesis*** (*GDC 84 – 87*) which are:

1. To Promote Knowledge of the Faith

By deepening knowledge of the faith, catechesis not only nourishes the life of faith but equips it to explain itself to the world. (GDC 85)

- by faithfully incorporating into the parish catechetical program the Church's teaching as it is found in the Church documents and in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,
- by sharing the Church's teaching, as found in the above documents, with Catechists in order to help them grow in their understanding of the faith that they are teaching,
- by implementing the *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis, Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6, and Grade Seven and Grade Eight*.

2. To Give Moral Formation

Conversion to Jesus Christ implies walking in his footsteps. Catechesis must, therefore, transmit to the disciples the attitudes of the Master Himself. (GDC 85)

- by infusing into the religious instruction given in each session moral formation which helps the students realize what it means to live as disciples of Jesus,
- by insuring that, within the Religious Education Program, the moral dimensions of the Catholic Faith are clearly and consistently taught using *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis* and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,
- by keeping ever before the Catechists "conversion to and following of Jesus Christ" as the ultimate mission of their religious education sessions.

3. To Provide Liturgical Education

Communion with Jesus Christ leads to the celebration of his salvific presence in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. The Church ardently desires that all the Christian faithful be brought to that full, conscious and active participation which is required by the very nature of the liturgy and the dignity of the baptismal priesthood. (GDC 85)

- by fostering in the program participants a deep love and appreciation of the Mass, the Holy Eucharist and all the sacraments of the Church,
- by insuring that the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments is clearly and consistently taught to all children, youth and families in the Religious Education Program,
- by providing opportunities for Mass and the Sacrament of Penance at least once a semester for all the children in the Religious Education Program,
- by using current Church guidelines and liturgical principles in planning liturgical/sacramental celebrations and in designing catechetical sessions for Catechists and families.

4. To Teach to Pray

When Catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit. (GDC 85)

- by insuring that prayer is a significant part of each religious education session,
- by helping the Catechists become familiar with the variety of prayer forms in the Catholic Tradition so that they may introduce these to the children,
- by designing and implementing a variety of prayer forms and retreat experiences as an integral part of the Religious Education Program,
- by praying regularly with the Catechists using different styles of prayer – at meetings, in shared prayer sessions, at individual conferences,
- By structuring into the yearly calendar at least one day of prayer for Catechists.

5. To Educate for Community Life

Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church. (GDC 86)

- by making Catechists aware that in their catechetical sessions they are continuously educating for life in the Christian Community,
- by providing settings and experiences which create and promote Christian community, such as opportunities for –
 - o faith-sharing and prayer together,
 - o celebrating together the Eucharist and other liturgical experiences,
 - o socializing,
 - o collaborating in planning and evaluating the religious education program,
 - o affirming the contributions and talents of each member.

6. To Initiate into the Missionary Dimension

Catechesis seeks to equip the disciples of Jesus to be present as Christians in society through their professional, cultural and social lives. (GDC 86)

- by insuring that the Church's social teachings are integrated, as appropriate, into the catechesis of every level of the parish religious education program,
- by promoting social justice in all dimensions of religious education program,
- by incorporating opportunities for service into every level of the religious education program,
- by promoting understanding and respect for the priesthood and religious life, and encouraging the young people to consider these vocations,
- by presenting the lay vocation as the call to live, faithfully and heroically, the Christian life in the midst of a secular society,
- by preparing the youth to communicate respectfully with people of other religious beliefs by giving them a secure rootedness in their own Tradition, a basic understanding of the tenets of non-Catholic and non-Christian Traditions, and the certainty that each person is called to fullness of life in God.

Competencies for Administration

- Ability to administer the Religious Education Program in a manner which supports other parish ministries and contributes to the building up of parish community (*GDC 253-254*).
- Ability to select/hire, in consultation with the Pastor, staff to provide secretarial and support services.
- Ability to work effectively with a secretarial staff.
- Ability to design, implement and evaluate religious education program policies and procedures.
- Ability to plan, conduct and evaluate productive meetings.
- Ability to share and/or delegate administrative responsibilities.
- Ability to facilitate group interaction and teamwork (*GDC 159*).
- Ability to work with others to define a problem, generate alternative solutions and follow a course of action.
- Ability to affirm the contributions and talents of each Catechist and staff member.
- Ability to manage conflicts.
- Ability to communicate clearly and appropriately through writing and public speaking.
- Ability to plan, organize and manage one's time in accordance with priorities and work responsibilities.
- Ability to make effective use of computer and other technology for instructive and administrative purposes.
- Ability to draft the catechetical budget, to present it to the Pastor and appropriate parish financial groups, and to defend and negotiate it.
- Ability to maintain a total parish catechetical program securely within the perimeters of Church law, civil law and the administrative directives of Part 1 of the *Archdiocesan Handbook for Parish Directors & Coordinators of Religious Education*.

Relational Skills of the Director of Religious Education

Relationship to Archdiocesan Catechetical Office (GDC 265 – 267)

- Relates with Archdiocesan Catechetical Office as “the means which the Bishop of the Diocese, as head of the community and teacher of doctrine, utilizes to direct and moderate all the catechetical activities of the diocese” (GDC 265).
- Carries out catechetical directives of the Archbishop as the primary catechetical authority of the Archdiocese (GDC 222-223).
- Directs parish program in accordance with the leadership of Archdiocesan Catechetical Office (GDC 272 – 278).
- Supports, promotes and implements archdiocesan policies and programs affecting catechesis.
- Achieves Archdiocesan Certification as a Director of Religious Education.
- Participates in Archdiocesan professional formation as well as in regular meetings and projects of Regional Catechetical Office.
- Completes in a timely manner Archdiocesan reports, surveys and consultations.

Relationship to Pastor (GDC 224 -225)

- Administers with accountability to the Pastor.
- Collaborates with Pastor in implementing catechetical directives coming from Pope, Sacred Congregations, U.S. Bishops, the N.Y. State Bishops (GDC 268 to 271).
- Shares in the Pastor’s responsibility for catechetical ministry of the parish.
- Communicates and meets regularly with the Pastor.
- Establishes, reviews, and evaluates mutual expectations with Pastor.
- Advises the Pastor of trends which will affect catechetical planning.
- Recommends to the Pastor the shaping of parish policies affecting catechesis.

Relationship to Parish (GDC 257-258)

- Keeps the parish community ever aware that Catechesis is a primary responsibility of the parish to each and all of its members (*Canon 528*).
- Works consistently to promote a healthy parish life, realizing that this is the necessary context for an effective Religious Education Program,
- Discerns, both personally and with the Pastor whether or not to join the parish if living in a parish other than the place of work.
- Strives with Pastor and Parish Staff to apply to parish community the directives on inculturation of the Gospel given in *General Directory for Catechesis 202 to 214*.
- Recognizes as assets of the entire parish community all parish buildings/resources; collaborates in management of policies and calendars to make these resources available as appropriate to all parish groups, e.g., parish religious education center, school hall, meetings rooms, technology.

Relationship to Parish Staff

- Serves as a member of the parish staff (*GDC 72*).
- Communicates and meets regularly with the other members of the parish staff.
- Serves as a resource person for the parish staff on catechetical issues and is able to provide in-service training for its members as needed.
- Advises the staff with regard to Religious Education Program planning.
- Participates in efforts to foster a faith community among the staff.
- Collaborates closely with those persons responsible for the parish youth ministry.
- Collaborates closely with the Parish Director for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in adapting the RCIA to meet the needs of the youth or children in the parish program who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (*GDC 256*)

Relationship to Parish Council

- Serves as a member of the Parish Council, meets regularly with the Council and serves as a member of the education committee.
- Serves as a resource person regarding catechetical issues.
- Reports regularly on developments in parish catechesis.
- Consults as needed with the Parish Finance Committee in the preparation of the Religious Education Program budget.
- Advises the Parish Council with regard to Religious Education Program planning.

Relationship to Others Involved in the Parish's Ministry(GDC 261 – 262)

- Provides leadership in fostering unity among the various ministries within the parish.
- Serves as a resource and consultant on catechetical issues.
- Supports parish projects and programs.

Relationship to Peers in the Catechetical Ministry

- Meets regularly with other catechetical leaders in the Archdiocese to offer mutual support and to learn from one another.
- Participates in professional associations related to the catechetical ministry.
- Participates regularly in opportunities to celebrate and share with other Directors and Coordinators the faith-life that grounds the commitment to catechetical leadership.

Relationship to Parish School Personnel (GDC 259 – 260)

- Serves as a consultant to the Principal and faculty on catechetical issues (GDC 73 – 75).
- Collaborates with the Principal in developing a unified, parish-based sacramental program for, and celebration of, First Penance, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- Works with the Principal in identifying common catechetical goals.
- Makes available upon request training opportunities for school Catechists.
- Coordinates calendar/program planning with the Principal.
- Coordinates with the Principal the sharing of facilities and resources.

Relationship to Regional School Personnel

- Works with the Pastor and the Principal to bring all the parish children attending the Catholic school into the parish-based sacramental programs for First Penance, First Eucharist, and Confirmation,
-
- helps the Pastor to provide for the parish families the parish-based celebrations of the sacraments.
- Works with Pastor to articulate written agreement on the use of the school facility & resources, which equally benefits the children and families in religious education and in the school.
- Coordinates with the Principal the sharing of the school facility and resources if these belong to parish.

Relationship to Families (GDC 255)

- Helps families recognize the many ways they are already revealing the face of God in the intimate sanctuary of family life, “the domestic Church.”
- Helps parents understand, own and fulfill their role as the primary religious educators of their children (GDC 226).
- Designs the Religious Education Program to assist parents in this responsibility (GDC 227).
- Demonstrates sensitivity to diverse family structures and their needs.
- Values and is responsive to the diverse cultural/ethnic backgrounds of the families in the parish.
- Communicates regularly with families on catechetical matters.
- Initiates and implements religious education programs in response to the special needs of the families of the parish.
- Implements fully the Family Catechesis Mandate of the Archdiocese.
- Facilitates family participation in the development of family catechesis programs.
- Evaluates the impact and effectiveness of the parish Religious Education Program for the families involved.

Relationship to Other Church Communities (GDC 197- 201)

- Communicates and cooperates with neighboring Catholic parishes, and offers mutual support and help where possible (*GDC 252*).
- Fosters in Catechists and students a deeper understanding of other faith traditions.
- Supports ecumenical outreach to other faith communities.
- Collaborates as appropriate in ecumenical and interfaith projects.

Relationship to the Local Community & the Wider Society (GDC 22-23)

- Cooperates as appropriate in programs and projects of the local civic community (*GDC 211*).
- Encourages Religious Education Program participants to continually seek ways to serve the needs of the neighborhood and the wider community.
- Teaches children and youth to live, and give witness to, the Gospel message in the midst of a secularized society (*GDC 193-194*).
- Identifies in the local community and wider society the manifestations of religious indifference and atheism that appear under the guise of secularism, and helps children and youth in the parish program to identify and confront them (*GDC 22-23*).
- Advises Catechists and families, when appropriate, of social and educational services provided by the civic community.

Competencies of the Coordinator of Religious Education

Theological and Catechetical Competencies (GDC 36 – 46)

- Ability to identify and explain clearly the official teachings of the Catholic Church contained in the section of the curriculum for which the Coordinator is responsible coupled with a demonstrated fidelity to these teachings.
- Ability to encourage Catechists and other adults to grow in their Catholic faith.
- Ability to select textbooks and materials which reflect the teachings of the Church (GDC 27 – 28).
- Ability to use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as a primary reference.
- Ability to recognize the elements in culture and society which lend understanding to the Church's teachings and incorporate those elements into the religious education program (GDC 193 – 194).
- Ability to explain the catechetical ministry and to present the catechetical leader's role and responsibilities in carrying out the mission of the parish.
- Ability to recognize in expressions of "popular piety" both the desirable qualities that resonate with the faith, and also the aspects that can lead to error (GDC 195 -196).
- Ability to complete the Basic Leadership Training Course and the Advanced Leadership Formation offered by the Catechetical Office.

Competencies for Catechist Formation (GDC 233 – 236)

- Ability to communicate with others in a way that invites their support for, and participation in, the catechetical ministry as the responsibility of all members of the parish community (GDC 220).
- Ability to recruit, interview and screen candidates, and select those with the potential to be good Catechists (GDC 221).
- Ability to discern and call forth the gifts and talents of Catechists.
- Ability to insure the formation of Catechists according to the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program (GDC 234).
- Ability to encourage the Catechists to pursue their formation and to assist them in finding courses, workshops and growth opportunities (GDC 238).
- Ability to observe the teaching/learning situation of each session and to provide ways for the Catechists to improve as needed in catechetical content and methodology as well as in the management of religious education sessions.
- Ability to provide the Catechists with the instruction and formation which observation has shown is necessary.
- Ability to support Catechists and to facilitate the development of a faith community among the Catechists and staff (GDC 246 – 247).
- Ability to manage the personnel working in the Coordinator's area of responsibility, to evaluate, to challenge inappropriate behavior/performance, to call for correction, and to dismiss when necessary.

Competencies for Program Development

- Ability to plan the Religious Education Program in accordance with the catechetical documents of the Church (*GDC 257*).
- Ability to take a leadership role in planning annual goals and objectives for the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Ability to select from existing learning models the most appropriate means of addressing the catechetical needs in the Coordinator's area of responsibility, including catechesis of those persons with special learning needs.
- Ability to select, adapt and facilitate the use of catechetical texts and resources, according to Church documents, the USCCB protocol, archdiocesan directives and the needs of the parish (*GDC 283*).
- Ability to use contemporary technology to promote catechesis (*GDC 209*).
- Ability to discern and address the influences that media has on society and the formation of the individual.
- Ability to insure that the Religious Education Program includes for each age level in the Coordinator's area of responsibility, the social justice teachings of the Church (*GDC 17 – 19*).
- Ability to make use of the resources provided by archdiocesan and community services to augment program development.
- Ability to choose and use procedures and tools for the effective evaluation of the Religious Education Program in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Ability to integrate into the Coordinator's area of catechetical responsibility the **Six Fundamental Tasks of Catechesis** (*GDC 84 – 87*), which are:

1. To Promote Knowledge of the Faith

By deepening knowledge of the faith, catechesis nourishes not only the life of faith but equips it to explain itself to the world. (GDC 85)

- by insuring that the Church's teaching is faithfully presented within the Coordinator's area of responsibility, by using the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,
- by helping Catechists to use the Catechism and the resources in their Catechist's manual to come to an adult understanding of the material they are teaching,.
- by implementing the *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis, Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6, and Grade Seven and Grade Eight*.

2. To Give Moral Formation

Conversion to Jesus Christ implies walking in His footsteps. Catechesis must, therefore, transmit to the disciples the attitudes of the Master Himself. (GDC 85)

- by infusing into the religious instruction given in the Coordinator's area of responsibility a moral formation which helps the students realize what it means to live as disciples of Jesus,
- by insuring that within the Coordinator's area of responsibility, the moral dimensions of the Catholic faith are clearly and consistently taught using the *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis*,
- by keeping ever before the Catechists "conversion to and following of Jesus Christ" as the ultimate mission of their religious education sessions.

3. To Provide Liturgical Education

Communion with Jesus Christ leads to the celebration of his salvific presence in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. The church ardently desires that all the Christian faithful be brought to that full, conscious and active participation which is required by the very nature of the liturgy and the dignity of the baptismal priesthood. (GDC 85)

- by fostering in the participants of the program a deep love for and appreciation of the Eucharist and the other sacraments of the Church,
- by insuring that the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments is clearly and consistently taught in the Coordinator's area of responsibility,
- by providing opportunities for Mass and the Sacrament of Penance for all the children in the Religious Education Program at least once a semester,
- by using current Church guidelines and liturgical principles in planning liturgical/sacramental celebrations for Catechists and children.

4. To Teach to Pray

When Catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit. (GDC 85)

- by insuring that prayer is a significant part of each religious education session in the Coordinator's area of responsibility,
- by helping the Catechists become familiar with a variety of prayer forms in the Catholic Tradition so that they may introduce these to the children,
- by offering a variety of prayer forms and retreat experiences as an integral part of the Religious Education Program,
- by praying regularly with the Catechists using different styles of prayer,
- By structuring into the yearly calendar at least one day of prayer for Catechists.

5. To Educate for Community Life

Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church. (GDC 86)

- by making Catechists aware that in their catechetical sessions they are continuously educating for life in the Christian Community,
- by providing settings and experiences which create and promote Christian community, such as opportunities for -
 - o faith-sharing and prayer together,
 - o celebrating the Eucharist together,
 - o socializing,
 - o collaborating in planning and evaluating the Religious Education Program,
 - o affirming the contributions and talents of each member.

6. To Initiate into the Missionary Dimension

Catechesis "seeks to equip the disciples of Jesus to be present as Christians in society through their professional, cultural and social lives. (GDC 86)

- by insuring that the Church's social teachings are integrated, as appropriate, into the catechesis of each level in the Coordinator's area of responsibility,
- by promoting social justice in all dimensions of the religious education program.
- by incorporating opportunities for service into all levels of the religious education program,
- by promoting understanding and respect for the priesthood and the religious life, and encouraging young people to consider these vocations,
- by presenting the lay vocation as the call to live, faithfully and heroically, the Christian life in the midst of a secular society,
- by preparing the youth to communicate respectfully with people of other religious beliefs by giving them a secure rootedness in their own tradition, a basic understanding of the tenets of non-Catholic and non-Christian traditions, and the certainty that each person is called to fullness of life in God.

Competencies for Administration (GDC 253-254)

- Ability to administer a Religious Education Program in a manner which supports other parish ministries and contributes to the building up of parish community.
- Ability to collaborate with the Pastor and other administrators of the religious education program in the selection/hiring of secretarial staff.
- Ability to work effectively with a secretarial staff.
- Ability to articulate, implement and evaluate religious education program policies and procedures.
- Ability to plan, conduct and evaluate productive meetings.
- Ability to share and/or delegate administrative responsibilities.
- Ability to facilitate effective group interaction and teamwork (*GDC 159*).
- Ability to work with others to define a problem, generate alternative solutions and follow a course of action.
- Ability to affirm the contributions and talents of each Catechist and staff member.
- Ability to manage conflicts.
- Ability to communicate clearly and appropriately through writing and public speaking.
- Ability to plan, organize and manage one's time in accordance with priorities and work responsibilities.
- Ability to make effective use of computer and other technology for instructive and administrative purposes.
- Ability to draft the Religious Education Program budget for the appropriate financial consultants, and to negotiate it.
- Ability to maintain the Religious Education Program securely within the perimeters of Church law, civil law and the administrative directives of Part 1 of the *Archdiocesan Handbook for Parish Directors & Coordinators*.

Relational Skills of the Coordinator of Religious Education

Relationship to Archdiocesan Catechetical Office (GDC 265 – 267)

- Relates with Archdiocesan Catechetical Office as “the means which the Bishop of the diocese, as head of the community and teacher of doctrine, utilizes to direct and moderate all the catechetical activities of the diocese” (GDC 265).
- Carries out the catechetical directives of the Archbishop as the primary catechetical authority of the Archdiocese (GDC 222 – 223).
- Coordinates parish program in accordance with leadership of Archdiocesan Catechetical Office (GDC 272 – 278).
- Supports, promotes and implements archdiocesan policies and programs in areas of Coordinator’s responsibility.
- Achieves Archdiocesan Certification as a Coordinator of Religious Education.
- Participates in Archdiocesan professional formation as well as in regular meetings and projects of Regional Catechetical Office.
- Completes in a timely manner Archdiocesan reports, surveys and consultations in the Coordinator’s area of responsibility.

Relationship to Pastor (GDC 224 – 225)

- Administers with accountability directly to the Pastor if there is no Director of Religious Education on staff, recognizing that the Pastor has the primary responsibility to ensure that the catechetical needs, goals and priorities of the parish are identified, articulated and met.
- Cooperates with the Pastor* in implementing the catechetical directives from the Pope, the Sacred Congregations, the United States Bishops, and the New York State Bishops (GDC 268 to 271).
- Assists in Pastor's responsibility for the catechetical ministry of the parish.
- Communicates and meets regularly with the Pastor*.
- Establishes, reviews, and evaluates mutual expectations with the Pastor*.
- Discusses with the Pastor* trends which will affect catechetical planning.
- Suggests to the Pastor* the shaping of parish policies affecting catechesis.

**If the Coordinator is accountable to a parish Director of Religious Education, individual meetings would be with the Pastor and/or Director as appropriate.*

Relationship to Parish (GDC 257 – 258)

- Keeps the parish community ever aware that Catechesis is a primary responsibility of the parish to each and all of its members (*Canon 528*).
- Works consistently to promote a healthy parish life, realizing that this is the necessary context for an effective Religious Education Program.
- Discerns both personally and with the Pastor whether or not to join the parish if living in a parish other than the place of work.
- Strives with the Pastor and the parish staff to apply to parish community the directives on inculturation of the Gospel given in the *General Directory for Catechesis 202 to 214*.
- Recognizes as assets of entire parish community all parish buildings/resources; collaborates in management of policies and calendars to make these resources available as appropriate to all parish groups e.g. parish religious education center, school, hall, meeting rooms, technology.

Relationship to Parish Staff

- Serves as a member of the parish staff (*GDC 72*).
- Communicates and meets regularly with the other members of the parish staff.
- Serves as a resource person for the parish staff on catechetical issues in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Advises the staff with regard to program planning in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Cooperates in efforts to develop a faith community among the staff.
- Collaborates closely with those persons responsible for the parish youth ministry.
- Collaborates closely with the Parish Director for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in adapting the RCIA to meet the needs of the youth or children in the parish program who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (*GDC 256*).

Relationship to Parish Council

- Serves on the Parish Council education committee if there is a Director of Religious Education and serves as a member of the Parish Council if there is no Director of Religious Education.
- Serves as a resource person regarding catechetical issues in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Reports regularly on catechetical programs in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Consults as needed with the Parish Finance Committee in the preparation of the Religious Education Program budget if there is no Director.
- Advises the Parish Council with regard to Religious Education Program planning for the Coordinator's area of responsibility.

Relationship to Others Involved in Parish's Ministry (GDC 261 – 262)

- Participates in fostering unity among the various ministries within the parish.
- Services as a consultant on catechetical issues in the Coordinator's area of responsibility.
- Supports parish projects and programs.

Relationship to Peers in the Catechetical Ministry

- Meets regularly with other Catechetical Leaders in the Archdiocese to offer mutual support and to learn from one another.
- Participates in professional associations related to the catechetical ministry.
- Participates regularly in opportunities to celebrate and share with other Directors and Coordinators the faith-life that grounds the commitment to catechetical leadership.

Relationship to Parish School Personnel (GDC 259 – 260)

- Serves as a consultant to the Principal and faculty on catechetical issues in the Coordinator's area of responsibility (GDC 73 – 75).
- Collaborates with Principal in developing a unified, parish-based sacramental program for, and celebration of, First Penance, First Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Works with the Principal in identifying common catechetical goals.
- Coordinates calendar/program planning with the Principal.
- Coordinates with the Principal the sharing of facilities and resources.

Relationship to Regional School Personnel

- Works with the Pastor and the Principal to bring all the parish children attending the regional school into the parish-based sacramental programs for First Penance, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- Helps the Pastor to provide for the parish families the parish-based celebrations of the sacraments .
- Works with Pastor to articulate a written agreement on the use of the school facility and resources which equally benefits the children and families in Religious Education and in the school.
- Coordinates with the Principal the sharing of the school facility and resources if these belong to parish.

Relationship to Families (GDC 255)

- Helps families recognize the many ways they are already revealing the face of God in the intimate sanctuary of family life, “the domestic Church”.
- Helps parents understand, own and fulfill their role as the primary religious educators of their children (*GDC 226*).
- Designs the Religious Education Program to assist parents in this responsibility (*GDC 227*).
- Demonstrates sensitivity to diverse family structures and their needs.
- Values and is responsive to the diverse cultural/ethnic backgrounds of the families in the parish.
- Communicates regularly with families on catechetical matters.
- Implements religious education programs in response to the special needs of families in the Coordinator’s area of responsibility.
- Implements fully the Family Catechesis Mandate of the Archdiocese
- Facilitates family participation in the development of family catechesis programs.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the parish Religious Education Program for the families involved.

Relationship to Other Church Communities (GDC 197 – 201)

- Communicates and cooperates with neighboring Catholic parishes, and offers mutual support and help where possible (GDC 252).
- Encourages in Catechists and students a deeper understanding of other faith traditions.
- Supports ecumenical outreach to other faith communities.
- Collaborates as appropriate in ecumenical and interfaith projects.

Relationship to the Local Community and the Wider Society (GDC 22-23)

- Cooperates as appropriate in programs and projects of the local civic community (GDC 211).
- Encourages Religious Education Program participants to continually seek ways to serve the needs of the neighborhood and the wider community.
- Teaches children and youth to live and give witness to the Gospel message in the midst of a secularized society . (GDC 193-194)
- Identifies in the local community and wider society, the manifestations of religious indifference and atheism that appear under the guise of secularism, and helps children and youth to identify and confront them (GDC 22 – 23).
- Advises Catechists and families, when appropriate, of social and educational services provided by the civic community.