

Outline for Introductory Presentation to the Parents in the Parish Religious Education Program On the Family-Based Parish Religious Education Approach

Additional Resource for Director/Coordinator of Religious Education

The child's formation in the faith is carried out above all in the family, the parish community as we worship and serve, and the parish religious education program.

1. The Role of the Parent in the Faith-Life of Their Children

The Church recognizes the parent's crucial role in the faith-life of their children.

See *Archdiocesan Handbook for Parish Directors and Coordinators of Religious Education*: section on Family-Centered Catechesis, pages Fam-1 and Fam-3 to 4.

2. The Role of the Parish Community in Religious Education.

Participation in the Sunday liturgy is foundational to the development of the faith-life of the child.

In addition, the many ways the parish community responds to the Gospel and the many opportunities for service impact the child's growth as a disciple of Jesus.

See *Archdiocesan Handbook for Parish Directors and Coordinators of Religious Education*: section on Family-Centered Catechesis, page Fam-6 .

3. The Content of Religious Education

Authentic religious education must be faithful to the teachings of the Church. The U.S. Catholic Bishops have approved the content of certain major religious education textbooks by Catholic publishers which assure an orderly, thorough and faithful presentation using methods that are educationally sound and age appropriate. In addition, the Archdiocese of New York has developed *Guidelines for Catechesis, for Grades K through 6* and for *Grades 7 and 8* which must be used by all religious education programs and parochial schools.

4. Family-Based Parish Religious Education

Family-based religious education takes place under the authority of the pastor through the direction of the parish religious education director. The faith is taught in the home by the parent, who is commissioned by the pastor to be the catechist for his/her own children.

The parent-catechist and the child/children are guided and supported by the parish religious education structure throughout the instruction. The instruction consists in 90 minutes a week for 30 weeks offered from September through May.

Every month, the parent meets with the director of religious education and is prepared to teach for the coming weeks. At the same time, the child meets with a parish catechist to review and strengthen what has been learned at home.

The decision to accept the custodial parent/guardian's application to participate in the Family-Based Religious Education Approach is made by the pastor in consultation with the parish director of religious education.