



Diocese of Richmond

April 18, 2018

Office of the Bishop

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am pleased to affirm the use of the diocesan catechetical curriculum developed under the leadership of Bishop Francis DiLorenzo, July 1, 2011. This curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth Grade is designed for use in parishes to support parents and catechists in handing on the faith to children and youth. It corresponds closely to the curriculum plan used by our diocesan Catholic Schools.

Formal catechesis in a religious education program is only one aspect of a young person's lifelong faith formation. The formative process begins at birth. In the Rite of Baptism, parents are given the profound privilege and responsibility of being their child's first teachers in the faith. Most of the religious attitudes and values that children acquire come from their parents and home life. This curriculum plan, based on scripture and the teaching of the church, seeks to support parents in their mission as "primary educators in the faith" (GDC 255). Parent Pages are provided with developmental descriptions for each grade level and the appendix lists age-appropriate prayers and teachings of the faith.

The curriculum is presented as learning outcomes organized according to the six tasks of catechesis, and alternatively, the liturgical year. This provides parishes with flexibility in choosing a textbook series and other resources to implement the curriculum plan. Use of this systematic curriculum, with textbooks and resources in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, helps ensure a structured and comprehensive presentation of Catholic teaching. Catechist pages provide a list of key teachings and methodologies suited to each grade level.

Pope Francis states that "The Church is called to cooperate with parents through suitable pastoral initiatives, assisting them in the fulfilment of their educational mission. She must always do this by helping them to appreciate their proper role and realize that by their reception of the sacrament of marriage they become ministers of their children's education. In educating them, they build up the Church, and in so doing, they accept their God-given vocation." (*Amoris Laetitia* #85) In promulgating this diocesan curriculum and its use, it is my hope that parishes, pastors, parents, and catechists will be assisted in reaching the minds, hearts and souls of children and youth in our church today.

With sincere thanks for all that you do to promote the Gospel.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry C. Knestout".

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Bishop of Richmond