



FAITH IN OUR FUTURE

ENSURING QUALITY PARISH-BASED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Educating our children in the Catholic Faith encompasses much more than Catholic day schools. The Community Faith Building Endowment Fund helps support some 50,000 students enrolled in parish religious education programs throughout the archdiocese, and the 4,000 catechists who serve them. We are all responsible for ensuring these programs are of first-rate quality — not only educating youth in Church doctrine and tradition, but also helping them develop their Catholic identity, embrace their role as Catholics in the community, immerse them in prayer and spirituality, and build the skills to take on life’s challenges in a faith-directed way.

Following Archbishop Timothy Dolan’s directive for a renewed commitment to catechesis, the office will use endowment funds for initiatives furthering the quality

of religious education across the archdiocese.

The *Faith In Our Future* Campaign will establish a \$5 million *Community Faith Building Endowment Fund* to provide funds for promising new efforts to make spiritual development, scripture study, Catholic teachings and service projects relevant and compelling for Catholics of all ages.

RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO CATECHESIS

The archdiocesan Office for Catechesis and Youth Ministry supports and guides parishes in developing comprehensive, high-quality learning communities for children, youth, young adults, and their families, including:

- Solid foundations in scripture and church teaching;
- Supporting youth and families with quality sacramental formation in preparation for First Reconciliation and Eucharist and Confirmation, as well as other pivotal points in students’ lives;
- Engaging in service, such as the week-long Reach Out, Reach In summer camp for high schoolers.

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More on reverse side.

Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Students work at Catholic Charities, Sojourner Truth House, the Born Family Farm and other sites, practicing lives of simplicity and social justice;

- Participating in worship with the larger parish community, with training to serve as lectors and cantors; and an appreciation of Catholic prayer and devotion;
- Developing leadership skills, with focused opportunities such as representing youth on the local parish council and broader opportunities such as participating in the National Catholic Youth Conference;
- Preparing for active roles in the Church and society at large.

TRAINING EFFECTIVE CATECHISTS

The catechists who prepare our children for the sacraments and introduce them to Catholic prayers, traditions and doctrine must be properly trained for this vital role. The archdiocese will offer resources for certification and opportunities for training, including:

- Archdiocesan summer catechetical institute;
- Internships for people interested in catechetical leadership;
- Training youth ministry leaders in skills such as retreat leadership;
- Access to national catechist training programs.
- John Paul II Center for Faith Formation

ASSURING STRONG CURRICULUM

The archdiocese will also provide resources to encourage accreditation of parish religious education programs. This is an opportunity to recognize and affirm programs with strong structure and content and

to present those programs as models. Clear curriculum standards and measurements also help parish leaders identify the resources they need to create effective religious education programs.

TAKING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO FORMATION

The ultimate goal of formation programs is strengthening adult faith. Youth catechesis and ministry programs set the stage. While the archdiocesan office's main purpose is to support parish-based education, the office will also initiate events to generate enthusiasm and raise the profile of youth ministry, such as youth rallies, regional gatherings with the Archbishop, and other programs strengthening the evangelizing presence in the broader community.

The archdiocese also seeks to enhance innovative use of technology in three key areas:

- Helping adult instructors obtain the education they seek, through online education and formation (Campaign initiatives supporting the John Paul II Center also promote this use of technology);
- Connecting people and encouraging interaction beyond parish borders – for example, using teleconferencing and online access to create a multi-location formation conference, alternating years with the Lifelong Faith Formation Conference;
- Improving technological literacy for parish leaders and parents, helping them evaluate online content and make the best use of available tools.

Finally, the Office for Catechesis and Youth Ministry will work with parishes in creating opportunities for intergenerational programming—giving families, parishioners and the local community the chance to see young people enthusiastic about their faith and their Catholic identity.

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