

# *Faith Lived — Faith Shared*

Fourth Edition  
2001



*Regulations  
for the  
Formation and Certification of Catechists  
of Children and Adults*

*Archdiocese of Baltimore*

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**For those involved in catechesis for children (Kindergarten - Grade 5) and adults, the appropriate information concerning Catechist Certification is found in “Faith Lived—Faith Shared”.**

**For those involved in ministry to youth (Grades 6-12), including catechesis, the appropriate information concerning Youth Ministry Certification is found in “Rooted In the Vision”.**



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Dear Friends in Christ,

As I read through this 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Faith Lived-Faith Shared*, I am reminded of the tremendous blessings our Church has received during these last 32 years with the development of so many rich and varied church teachings and writings. From the *Documents of Vatican Council II* in 1965 to the *General Directory for Catechesis* in 1997, we are encouraged and challenged to assure that those teaching religion in our Catholic schools and parish communities are well formed in the faith.

As Archbishop, I have a most serious responsibility to see that proper preparation and direction are given to those who teach our Catholic faith to adults, to young people and to children. And so I must ask all those involved in directing the elementary and adult faith formation programs in this Archdiocese to implement these regulations found in *Faith Lived-Faith Shared*. This new edition, like the previous ones, comes as a help to pastors, principals, directors of religious education and other ministers responsible for catechetical growth.

To all those who share in the teaching mission of the Church in this Archdiocese of Baltimore, I express deepest gratitude for the great dedication and effort you bring to the work of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide you as you carry out your responsibilities in service to the Word of God.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop of Baltimore



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Abbreviations</b>	5
<b>Ministry of Catechetics</b>	
What is Catechesis?	6
Who is a Catechist?	8
<b>Archdiocesan Regulations for Certification</b>	
Catechist Formation	9
Stages of Formation	11
Areas of Growth	13
Formation and Certification	14
Levels of Certification	15
Specializations in Adult Formation and Special Religious Education	17
Equivalency	20
Certification from other Dioceses	21
Renewal and Advancement	22
<b>Procedures</b>	
Application for Certification	25
Approval of Formation Programs	26
Opportunities for Growth	27
<b>Partnership in Catechesis</b>	28
<b>Conclusion</b>	30
<b>Appendix</b>	
1) Approved Programs for Clock Hours	31
2) Suggested Topic Areas for Ongoing Growth	33
3) Additional Bibliography	35
4) Request for Clock Hours Form	36
5) Certification Renewal Chart	38



# INTRODUCTION

The primary mission of the Church is to proclaim God and to be God's witness before the world. To do this, we must make known God's true face and loving plan of salvation for all people as Jesus Christ revealed it. (cf. GDC 23) The word "catechesis" is derived from the ancient Greek word meaning "to echo." As we move forward into the third millennium, our task as ministers of God's word is to resound God's love faithfully and authentically to all God's children; that is our response to God's loving call. Those called to echo the word of God in this loving and genuine way, to each age and in each new generation, are called "catechists."

In these times and in this place, we are blessed and we are challenged. We are blessed by our cultural prosperity. We are blessed by the technology that informs and connects us beyond boundaries that seemed insurmountable in the recent past. We are blessed by the diversity that is a gift to us through the many cultures that comprise our archdiocesan community. We are blessed by God's loving presence always around us. We are challenged by questions of injustice and poverty that often seem hidden in that very same prosperity. We are challenged by the materialism and busyness that surround us. We are challenged by the many distractions that send conflicting messages to God's children of any age.

We are called to respond to both the blessings and the challenges with a renewed dedication and enthusiasm. We aim to ensure excellence in catechesis so that all the faithful may grow in their knowledge of and response to the challenge of the Gospel message in today's world and so to build the Kingdom of God. (LG 25; *Christus Dominus* 12, 14; *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 68C; CT 12, 63)

If we take this aim seriously, we understand that the work of catechesis is the work of evangelization. A true catechist is a true evangelist. "...Evangelization must be viewed as the process by which the Church, moved by the spirit, proclaims and spreads the Gospel throughout the entire world." (GDC 48)

"The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ. All evangelizing activity is understood as promoting communion with Jesus Christ." (GDC 80)



# ABBREVIATIONS

## Documents Referenced In These Regulations

CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , USCCB, 1997.
CD	<i>Christus Dominus</i> , Decree of the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, Vatican Council II, 1965.
CT	<i>Catechesi Tradendae</i> , On Catechesis in Our Time, John Paul II, October 16, 1979.
EN	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i> , On Evangelization in the Modern World, Paul VI, December 8, 1975.
GC	<i>Guide for Catechists</i> , Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, 1993.
GDC	<i>General Directory for Catechesis</i> , Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, USCC, 1997.
GE	<i>Gravissimum Educationis</i> , Declaration on Christian Education, Vatican II, 1965.
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> , Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Vatican Council II, 1965.
OHWB	<i>Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us</i> , A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States, USCCB, 1999.



# MINISTRY OF CATECHETICS

## WHAT IS CATECHESIS?

“At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a person, the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father...Who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever.” ( CT 5; CCC 426) Whoever is called “*to teach Christ*” must first seek Christ. (CCC 428) “From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim Him, to evangelize, and to lead others to the “Yes” of faith in Jesus Christ”. (CCC 429)

*Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you and know that I am with you always, until the end of the world.*  
(Mt. 28: 18-20, NAB)

With these words, Jesus empowered the Apostles and, through them, the Church to continue his mission. A share in this great commission has been handed to women and men whom God has called, from generation to generation, to proclaim the Good News. *Catechesi Tradendae* places catechesis firmly within the Church’s mission, stating that “...her inner growth and correspondence with God’s plan depend essentially on catechesis.” (CT 13)

Catechesis must be situated strongly within the Church community. Faith must be lived in communion with those who have taken the same step as believers in Jesus. The Church community has the responsibility of training its members and welcoming them into an environment where they can live what they have learned as fully as possible. (cf. CT 24)

“The object of catechesis is realized by diverse, interrelated tasks. To carry them out, Catechesis is certainly inspired by the manner in which Jesus formed his disciples.” (GDC 84) The “essential tasks” of catechesis are:

- Promoting knowledge of the faith
- Liturgical education
- Moral formation
- Teaching to pray
- Educating for community life
- Missionary initiation

The tasks are rich and varied, but constitute a totality. Each task realizes, in its own way, the object of catechesis. (cf. GDC 85, 87) Beyond these stated tasks of education and knowledge, though, catechesis is a ministry, which draws people into loving community and meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. Catechesis does impart the message of the Gospel and our rich tradition, while at the same time inviting people into service that will create the kingdom of God on this earth.

# PERSONAL QUALITIES OF A CATECHIST

## WHO IS A CATECHIST?

A catechist is a fully initiated, practicing Catholic, at least 18 years of age, who has been invited to share in the catechetical ministry of the Church. This person is challenged and guided by the bishops of the United States to see one's self as responsive to a call from the Holy Spirit, "a special charism recognized by the Church." (*Guide for Catechist*, Overview #1)

In order to fulfill this office, the person must possess the basic human qualities of compassion and kindness, common sense, a sense of humor, an open and understanding heart, and a sense of one's own self-worth, all of which are necessary to give credible witness to the Gospel. Beyond these qualities, a catechist must exhibit a real and vital Catholic Christian faith based on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Persons are invited to be catechists who:

1. Believe deeply in Jesus in the Catholic tradition and want to share that belief with others.
2. Are committed to the Catholic Church and the Church's teaching mission, lead exemplary lives and participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church.
3. Are persons of prayer, conscious of the gift of faith in their lives.
4. Are committed to continuing growth and formation as catechists.
5. Are able to deal with conflict and disagreement in a sensitive and understanding manner.
6. Are comfortable with and able to communicate effectively with the age groups they will be catechizing.
7. Have the time to prepare for and lead their catechetical sessions and to participate in regular in-service planning meetings.

These are significant personal qualities and capabilities for which there can be no substitute. Should these attributes be lacking, an individual might be invited to serve in some role other than catechist. The skills, knowledge, and abilities to be a catechist can be learned.



# CATECHIST FORMATION

## WHAT IS CATECHIST FORMATION?

“Formation seeks to enable catechists to transmit the Gospel to those who desire to entrust themselves to Jesus Christ. The purpose of formation, therefore, is to make the catechist capable of communicating...the Gospel message.” (GDC 235)

The formation of catechists is a responsibility shared by the archdiocese and the parish, school, or other institution where catechists minister. Formation will help the catechist to grow in maturity as an adult, a believer, and an apostle (cf. GDC 238), and prepare the catechist to carry out the fundamental tasks of catechesis. Again, these tasks are to proclaim the Gospel message and promote knowledge of the faith, liturgical education, moral formation, prayer-life, education for community life, and missionary initiation. (cf. GDC 85)

Through their participation in catechist formation opportunities throughout the entire period of time that they carry out the ministry, catechists acquire sufficient knowledge and background and are enabled to become more effective, cooperative and powerful ministers of the Word. (cf. GDC 234-237)

The catechist relies on the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of the ministry of the Word in the Church. (cf. GDC 72) However, it is necessary for catechists to have a deep faith, a clear Christian and ecclesial identity, as well as a great social sensitivity (cf. GDC 7, 13), and be able to transmit not only a teaching but also an integral Christian formation. “Catechists must be able to be, at one and the same time, teachers, educators and witnesses of the faith.” (GDC 237)

The curricula for the formation of catechists in the *General Directory for Catechesis* includes background in the Old Testament, the life of Jesus, the history of the Church, a deepened understanding of the creed, the moral life, liturgy and prayer. Sacred Scripture should be the very soul of this formation. (cf. GDC 240) “All aspects of the formation of catechists must be thoroughly centered on Jesus Christ, be permeated by the Church’s understanding of the Gospel, and help them learn to communicate the Good News faithfully and effectively.” (OHWB 149)

Catechist formation should offer diverse opportunities for growth in knowledge and understanding of the faith and be presented in a variety of ways that honor the experience and different lifestyles of the catechists. A variety of proven methodologies, which can be used as examples, should be employed in presenting formation programs. Catechists need the competencies to:

- Animate a shared journey.
- Relate authentic Catholic faith to real-life circumstances.
- Guide them in prayer and through spiritual experiences.
- Integrate divergent tendencies into the full faith and life of the Church.
- Witness in their own lives the truth of the faith they are communicating.

Methodologies that would enable the above are:

- Effective interpersonal and community building skills.
- Respect for different learning styles for all ages.
- Ways to communicate and explore the Gospel with others using active and engaging methods appropriate to the learners and to the content.
- Techniques to be able to adapt to ever-changing circumstances. (cf. OHWB 151)

In addition, catechists need to be familiar with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as an important compendium of Church teaching and as a rich resource for their ministry. Because the catechumenal model is the primary model for catechesis, the *General Directory for Catechesis* also emphasizes that all catechists must have a basic understanding of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and how this process is linked to catechesis. (cf. GDC 91)

## What Are The Stages of Formation?

Three stages of formation provide for the gradual and systematic development of catechists:

### Orientation

This Orientation should include:

- An overview of the organization of the catechetical program for the parish/school: program goals and philosophy, administrative details and procedures, resources and program materials.
- An introduction to the Curriculum Guidelines of the Archdiocese: *“Resounding the Good News”* and *“The Religion Course of Study for Catholic Schools”*.
- A review of the process and opportunities for continuing catechist formation and the archdiocesan standards for catechist certification.
- Opportunities for praying together, for socialization, and the forming of community.

This formation is provided for all catechists, **new and experienced**, to prepare them to begin a particular catechetical season or program (e.g. the start of a new school year).

### Initial Formation

Prior to the beginning of catechetical ministry, each **new** catechist should participate in an introductory formation program that will introduce this ministry as a vocation and provide a basic sense of this ministry and its challenges, responsibilities and opportunities.

One aspect of this initial formation is the assessment of the individual’s particular needs, with a view to assuring that each has at least the minimum degree of knowledge and skills necessary to function competently as catechists. They are:

- The knowledge of the faith based on the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: the Profession of Faith, the Celebration of the Christian Mystery, Life in Christ, and Christian Prayer.

- The ability to plan lessons, to lead and evaluate sessions, to use age appropriate faith formation processes and to be competent in the use of media and resources.
- The designing and leading of prayer experiences.
- The designing and maintaining of an effective catechetical environment.
- The understanding of the spiritual, moral and human stages of growth development.

### **Ongoing Formation**

Catechists need not only introductory, but also ongoing formation in theology, catechetical methodology, and spirituality for this ministry (cf. GC 29). They are expected to comply with archdiocesan certification policies and standards, and, even after completing certification, to continue with annual ongoing formation.

Ongoing formation should provide regular opportunities for personal, spiritual and professional growth. One important aspect of ongoing formation is “guided reflection” on the experience of one’s ministry. This very experience of ministry can become a rich source of growth in developing one’s skills and commitment to ministry.

It is extremely helpful for catechists in both parishes and schools to receive periodic guidance from another more experienced catechetical minister (e.g. D/C/ARE, principal, Catholic school religion coordinator). Through a positive experience of evaluation, one is often able to see more clearly the strengths and areas that need ongoing development.

It must be remembered that throughout this entire process of catechist formation the goal and the heart of formation is in assisting persons to acquire and develop an aptitude and ability to communicate the Gospel message.

# AREAS OF GROWTH

## What are the Areas of Growth?

As persons called to nourish the faith of the community in a formal way, catechists themselves investigate and respond to opportunities for their personal growth, deeper understanding of the children and adults they teach, and continued appreciation of the process and message of catechesis. Catechists are to receive a balanced formation in each of the following areas of growth:

### **Area A - Catechist as a Person of Faith—the Spirituality of the Catechist**

This area refers to those experiences which foster the catechist's personal growth as an adult believer. Examples of formation topics include: understanding and use of Scripture for prayerful reflection, growth in prayer, and reflection on one's faith life, personal spirituality and communication/listening skills. In addition to these and related topics, retreats and days of recollection are two ways to experience clock hours in this area.

### **Area B - Understanding the Person Being Catechized**

This area refers to those experiences which assist the catechist in understanding the development of the whole person. This includes the stages of one's spiritual, moral, intellectual, psychological, social, emotional and physical development; multiple learning intelligences; various learning styles; and the impact of family, society, and culture.

### **Area C - Context and Process of Catechesis**

This area refers to those learning experiences which assist the catechist in understanding and using catechetical skills, e.g. learning environment, catechetical methodologies, group/classroom management skills, lesson planning, use of media and resources in catechesis, the use of technology for both home and classroom. This also includes an understanding of the catechetical documents that give meaning and direction to catechesis along with an acknowledgement of the role of the church, family and parish community in the catechetical process.

### **Area D—Message or Content of Catechesis**

This area of growth refers to those learning experiences which provide knowledge and understanding of the elements of the Christian message according to the *Documents of Vatican Council II, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the General Directory for Catechesis*. Some specific topics are: doctrine, creed, liturgy, sacraments, the content of Scripture, study of the church, church history, moral living, social justice, Mary and the saints and the various methods and types of prayer and spirituality.



# ARCHDIOCESAN REGULATIONS FOR FORMATION AND CATECHIST CERTIFICATION

## FORMATION AND CERTIFICATION

The Archbishop has the responsibility to see that catechists are properly prepared to carry out their role effectively and that continuing formation is available to them. (cf. Canon 780; GDC 223)

To implement this responsibility, these Catechist Certification Regulations are for all those catechists and teachers who are involved in the parishes and Catholic schools which are under the authority of the Archbishop of Baltimore. The regulations as listed in this handbook have been approved by the Archbishop of Baltimore.

Catechist Certification is the official recognition by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, through the Division of Religious Education, that a person has participated in approved formational experiences intended to enhance one's knowledge and skills as a catechist.

All parishes and schools under the authority of the Archbishop of Baltimore need to provide for the initial and ongoing formation of their catechists, in accord with the requirements outlined in this handbook.

The granting of certification is an indication that a person has sought to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to be more effective as a catechist. The reception of a certificate, however, does not guarantee that a person will be successful as a catechist. The decision, therefore, about whether a person should serve as a catechist in a particular parish or school is properly the responsibility of appropriate leaders in the parish or school.

It is the responsibility of the Division of Religious Education to see that these regulations for certification are implemented and to develop and approve programs and workshops through which persons can achieve the necessary hours of experience or academic credits to receive one of the levels of certification. (cf. GDC 233, 234).



## **ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATE**

**Requirements:**       **100** clock hours of formation (40 beyond Catechist Certification)  
                                  **15** hours minimum in each Area of Growth

**Length of Validity:**  **5** years

**Persons expected to achieve this level of certification:**

**Parish Administrators of Religious Education**  
**Religion Curriculum Coordinators in Catholic elementary schools**  
**Principals in Catholic elementary schools**  
**Volunteer Coordinators of Sacramental Preparation, Volunteer Coordinators of RCIA, Volunteer Coordinators of Adult Faith Formation, Volunteer Coordinators of Persons with Special Needs.**

Although these individuals are expected to achieve and maintain this level of certification, they may choose to seek the Professional Catechist Certificate.

## **PROFESSIONAL CATECHIST CERTIFICATE**

This level of certification requires **academic credits**, either graduate or under graduate. These credits must be granted by colleges or universities which are recognized by the Division of Religious Education. When applying for this level of certification a transcript must be sent to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation.

**Requirements:**       **18** academic credits  
                                  **2** credits minimum in each Area of Growth

**Length of Validity:**  **10** years

**Persons expected to achieve this level of certification:**

**Parish Directors / Coordinators of Religious Education**  
**Parish Directors/Coordinators of Adult Faith Formation**

All individuals listed above are expected to achieve and maintain this level of certification.



# SPECIALIZATIONS

## CERTIFICATION IN ADULT CATECHESIS

### **Catechist Certificate with a Specialization In Adult Faith Formation**

This certification requires a total of 60 clock hours. To receive this certificate one must complete the following four workshops.

#### **SEMINARS IN ADULT MINISTRY**

**(20 Clock Hours: 5-Area A; 7-Area B; 7-Area C and 3-Area D)**

This eight week series is designed for all who minister in any way with adults in the church. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity to examine and better understand the theological and social context of church ministry, its purpose and potential, key skills and spirituality. Topics include:

- Mission and Ministry in the Church
- The World and Church of Adults
- Stages of Adulthood
- Being Adult in Faith
- The Goals of Adult Ministry
- Relating with Adults, Parts I and II
- The Challenge of Ministry

#### **FOSTERING THE ADULT JOURNEY OF CONVERSION**

**(10 Clock Hours: 5-Area A; 1-Area B and 4-Area C)**

Faith is a gift destined to grow in the hearts of believers. Adhering to Jesus Christ sets in motion a process of continuing conversion, which lasts for the whole of life. (cf. GDC 56)

This four session series explores faith, conversion, our participation in the Paschal Mystery and evangelization as key elements in the spirituality of adults. *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* describes mature faith as being “living, explicit and fruitful”. The course looks at ways to foster these qualities in adult learners.

**READY, SET, PLAN!**  
**(10 Clock Hours in Area C)**

Using *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* as a primary source, this course will look at goals and principles of adult faith formation, how adults learn, and concrete approaches to catechizing adults. It details how to organize and plan for adult faith formation while paying attention to the specific characteristics which define a parish.

**THE CONTENT OF ADULT CATECHESIS**  
**(10 Clock Hours in Area D)**

Part Two of the *General Directory for Catechesis* gives the norms and criteria for presenting the Gospel message in catechesis. *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* provides the Six Dimensions of Adult Faith Formation. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* is the source for an “organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental contents of Catholic Doctrine”. (cf. GDC 121) *Resounding the Good News* (Curriculum Guidelines, Archdiocese of Baltimore), is the guide to correlating these elements for a cohesive catechesis of adults.

**ADDITIONAL FORMATION**  
**(10 Clock Hours)**

The above courses provide 50 of the 60 clock hours required for the Catechist Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis. The remaining 10 hours may be acquired through additional workshops, seminars, and retreats offered or approved by the Division of Religious Education.

**ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATE**  
**With a Specialization in Adult Catechesis**

1. A person with a *Catechist Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis* obtains an *Advanced Certificate*, by completing 40 additional clock hours
  - 5 in each area of growth (20 total) with an adult catechesis focus
  - 20 additional clock hours (any area of growth)
2. A person with a *Catechist Certificate with no Specialization in Adult Catechesis* obtains an *Advanced Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis*, by completing:
  - Seminars in Adult Ministry
  - Fostering the Adult Journey of Conversion
  - Ready, Set, Plan!

3. A person with no catechist certification, must complete 100 Clock Hours which include:

- Seminars in Adult Ministry
- Fostering the Adult Journey of Conversion
- Ready, Set, Plan!
- The Content of Adult Catechesis
- 20 additional clock hours with an adult catechesis focus (5 hours in each area of growth)
- 30 additional clock hours (any area of growth)

4. To acquire a Professional Catechist certificate in Adult Catechesis, a person must complete:

- 18 academic credits, either graduate or undergraduate from a Catholic institution with an adult catechesis focus.
- A minimum of two academic credits in each area of growth

5. A person with a *Professional Certificate* who wishes to add the *Specialization in Adult Catechesis* must complete:

- Seminars in Adult Ministry
- Fostering the Adult Journey of Conversion
- Ready, Set, Plan!
- 20 additional clock hours with an adult focus or 2 academic credits with an adult catechesis focus

### **CERTIFICATION IN CATECHESIS WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Within the Catechist Level of Certification the Division of Religious Education offers a specialization in *Catechesis with Persons with Disabilities*.

The *Catechist Certificate with a Specialization in Catechesis with Persons with Disabilities* requires a total of 60 clock hours of formation with a minimum of 10 hours in each area of growth. Persons who apply for this certificate are required to participate in four 4-week sessions. Topics for these 4 week sessions include:

1. Ministry to Persons with Disabilities (10 Hours—Area A)
2. Development and Characteristics of Persons with Disabilities (10 Hours—Area B)
3. Instructional Planning for Diverse Learners (10 Hours—Area C)
4. Classroom Content for Special Religious Education (10 Hours—Area D)

The remaining 20 hours for the *Catechist Certificate in Catechesis with Persons with Disabilities* may be acquired through additional workshops, seminars and retreats, in any area of growth, approved by the Division of Religious Education.



# ADDITIONAL HELPS TOWARD CERTIFICATION

## AN EQUIVALENCY FOR CERTIFICATION

**Past Experience:** The Division of Religious Education recognizes that the years of experience of an individual who has been serving in the ministry of catechesis are a valuable asset. This experience, in and of itself, does serve as a means of formation.

Hence, individuals may have acquired the knowledge and skills to be able to be effective catechists without having experienced the formation opportunities previously mentioned. In such cases, an individual may apply for an equivalency for one of the levels of certification.

Application for an equivalency is made to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation. The criteria to be followed is:

1. A written description of the person's background and experience as a catechist including length of service and places of employment or volunteer ministry.
2. A written description of continued development in the four areas of growth. This may include books/articles read or written, courses taken or taught, learning opportunities designed and implemented.
3. A current observation and a written report of one's effectiveness as a catechist from a person approved by the Division of Religious Education.
4. A letter of recommendation for granting an equivalency from the appropriate person from among the following:
  - Pastor
  - Officially recognized DRE / CRE / ARE
  - Catholic School Principal.

Prior consultation with the Coordinator of Catechist Formation is recommended to review the above steps and determine the person who will do the observations.

If additional formation is needed to achieve equivalency for one of the levels of certification, then arrangements can be made for an individualized program that would include study as well as experiences in the community-building and service dimensions of catechesis. It is preferred that the individual gain the additional formation through participation in parish, school, regional or archdiocesan workshops.

## **ACADEMIC CREDIT OR DEGREES**

1. Academic credits earned from colleges or universities may be counted toward certification if they are in the four Areas of Growth and after review by the Division of Religious Education. Credits in Theology and/or Religious Studies must be from a Catholic degree program.
2. Persons who have earned a Bachelor or graduate degree in religious education or theology will be eligible for the Professional Certificate. Application must include transcripts and evidence of consistent ongoing enrichment across all four areas of growth since the granting of the degree within the last 10 years.

**CERTIFICATION FROM OTHER DIOCESES:** Catechist certification that individuals have gained from other dioceses will be evaluated on an individual basis in accord with the criteria for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. A copy of the certificate along with a description of the workshops/courses, the number of sessions and time frame for each workshop is necessary. Submit the above information to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation.

# ADVANCEMENT AND RENEWAL

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR RENEWAL OR ADVANCEMENT ?

Catechists not only need introductory formation but also ongoing formation in theology, in the spiritual life, in knowledge of the learner, and catechetical methodology. (cf. CT 5). Receiving an initial catechist certification is just the beginning. Through ongoing formation catechists can renew themselves and increase their skills through growth and enrichment. (cf. GDC 238) Continued growth in our personal relationship with Jesus Christ is primary to proclaim the Gospel.

Catechists must strive to renew their certification or advance to a deeper level of certification. Clock hours for a particular level must be obtained during the validity period for that certificate.

### 1. **PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATE** **Parish Catechists—Non-renewable**

This is an interim recognition in support of those individuals who are seeking catechist certification. It is granted for a period of three years.

**To advance to the Catechist Certificate** those who have a Preliminary Certificate must acquire an additional 30 clock hours with a minimum of 5 in each area of growth during this three year period. The Catechist Certificate requires a total of 60 clock hours with a minimum of 10 in each area of growth.

### **PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATE** **Catholic school teachers who do not teach religion**

This certificate is valid for three (3) years. The Preliminary Certificate must be updated every three years by taking ten (10) clock hours of formation with a minimum of 2 clock hours in each area of growth.

### 2. **ADVANCING FROM CATECHIST CERTIFICATE TO ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATE**

To move from Catechist Certification to Advanced Catechist Certification one must have:

- An additional 40 clock hours
- A minimum of 5 clock hours in each area of growth
- The remaining twenty (20) clock hours may be obtained in any area of growth.

### **EXTRA CLOCK HOURS**

If a catechist submits clock hours in excess of the 30 clock hours required for the Preliminary Certificate, these excess hours will be considered for advancement to the Catechist level if no more than three years has elapsed between the time the excess hours were acquired and the time the person applies for the Catechist Certificate.

If a catechist submits clock hours in excess of the 60 clock hours required for the Catechist Certificate, these excess hours will be considered for advancement to the Advanced Catechist Certificate if no more than five years has elapsed between the time the excess hours were acquired and the time the person applies for the Advanced Catechist Certificate.

Final judgment regarding the implementation of this will be made by the Coordinator of Catechist Formation.

### **3. RENEWING CATECHIST AND ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATES Renewed every five years**

- Renewed with twenty (20) additional clock hours of formation during the validity period of renewal
- A minimum of three (3) clock hours in each area of growth
- The remaining eight (8) hours may be obtained in any area of growth

Clock hours for renewal of either the Catechist or Advanced Certification must be earned during the five year validity period. Since catechist formation requires ongoing formation, any excess hours gained prior to this period may not be used for renewal of certificates.

### **4. PROFESSIONAL CATECHIST CERTIFICATE Renewed every 10 years**

- Renewed by gaining six additional academic credits or sixty (60) clock hours of formation or any combination of these within the validity period.
- One academic credit equals ten clock hours of formation
- Care should be taken to insure a balance of formation across the four areas of growth.

These 60 clock hours or credits must be in the four areas of growth. Leadership skill development is a necessary part of the ongoing formation for those having a Professional Certificate, but these skills are in the area of management and administration. Therefore, clock hours are not given for them.

**5. CATECHIST and ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATE with a Specialization in ADULT CATECHESIS—Renewed every five years**

- Renewed with a total of twenty (20) additional clock hours of formation during the validity period of renewal.
- A minimum of three (3) clock hours in each area of growth with an adult catechesis focus.
- The remaining eight (8) hours may be obtained in any area of growth.

**6. PROFESSIONAL CATECHIST CERTIFICATE with a SPECIALIZATION in ADULT CATECHESIS—Renewed every 10 years**

- Renewed by gaining six (6) additional academic credits or sixty (60) clock hours or a combination of these within the validity period.
- One credit equals 10 clock hours.
- A focus on adult catechesis with a balance in the four areas of growth should be obtained.

**7. CATECHIST CERTIFICATE with a SPECIALIZATION IN CATECHESIS with PERSONS with DISABILITIES—Renewed every five years**

- Renewed with a total of twenty (20) additional clock hours of formation during the validity period of renewal.
- A minimum of three (3) clock hour in each area of growth with a focus on disabilities.
- The remaining eight (8) hours may be obtained in any area of growth.

**SEE RENEWAL CHART IN APPENDIX**



# APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION

## HOW TO APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION

- Application forms are available from the Division of Religious Education, the DRE, or the school principal.
- The form must be signed by the applicant's immediate supervisor from among the following:
  - Pastor
  - Officially recognized DRE/CRE/ARE
  - Catholic School Principal
  - Catholic School Assistant Principal.
- The signature of the above mentioned person indicates that the applicant is an active Catholic who is able to participate fully in the sacramental life of the church and possesses the minimum personal qualities as described in this handbook.
- The original hard, yellow copy application form must be sent in to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation. Photo-copies or faxed copies of the application will not be accepted. The applicant should make a copy of the application form and any papers included for him or herself before sending the original application to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation.

### When Are Applications Due?

The Division of Religious Education will review all applications for certification received by **March 15<sup>th</sup>** of each year. Applications may be sent in any time during the year prior to that date. However, applications received after March 15 will be processed for the following year.

### Where Are Applications Sent?

All applications should be sent to:

The Division of Religious Education  
Coordinator of Catechist Formation  
320 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

### How Are Certificates Received ?

Those who are granted a certificate are expected to receive their certificate at the Archdiocesan Recognition Celebration held at different sites within the archdiocese. Those who are unable to participate in the recognition celebration will receive their certificates through the mail.



# APPROVAL OF FORMATION PROGRAMS

## HOW ARE FORMATION PROGRAMS APPROVED?

The following criteria are used to determine approval for catechetical workshops, sessions and formation opportunities. All persons designing formation opportunities or bringing in a presenter should be cognizant of these criteria.

- The workshop presenter is knowledgeable, experienced in current developments in theology and catechetics and a Catholic in good standing in the Church.
- The workshop is related to one of the four areas of growth described in these regulations or is a composite of two or more areas of growth.
- The workshop is conducted specifically for adult catechists in accord with sound principles of adult learning, offering an opportunity for interaction between and among leader and participants.
- The workshop is designed as a formation opportunity to develop the catechists' knowledge, skills and abilities rather than an organizational/planning meeting or leadership development session.

Application for approval of any workshops or formation sessions is made to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation **prior** to publicizing the event if at all possible.

The "Request for Clock Hour Form" may be obtained from the Division of Religious Education or downloaded from the Division's Web Page. A copy is also found in the Appendix of this handbook.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

- ◆ **PARISH/SCHOOL CATECHIST FORMATION PROGRAMS:** Programs and workshops designed by or offered by the parish or school may be counted toward catechist certification with approval from the Division of Religious Education. The DRE or school principal should apply for clock hours prior to the event if at all possible.
- ◆ **REGIONAL PROGRAMS:** The Regions of the archdiocese may also request approval for clock hours for the various catechetical programs that are designed for their specific regions. The person organizing the event is responsible for obtaining approval **prior** to the event from the Division of Religious Education
- ◆ **ARCHDIOCESAN PROGRAMS:** Approved clock hours and Areas of Growth will be indicated on the brochures and fliers for the following programs: Institutes, programs, and workshops offered by the Division of Religious Education; the Division of Catholic Schools; and the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.
- ◆ **NATIONAL PROGRAMS:** National conventions, congresses or workshops related to catechetical ministry offered on a national basis or by other diocesan offices may be counted toward certification after review by the Division of Religious Education. The individual who attends such programs must submit a “Request for Clock Hours” or other appropriate form where provided.
- ◆ **OTHER PROGRAMS:** Occasionally, parishes, schools, religious communities, institutions or other regional/national bodies offer learning opportunities for adults which, though not designed specifically for catechetical ministry, do foster faith growth of adults, and may be beneficial to catechists. It is possible that some portion of the experience can count toward certification after review by the Division of Religious Education. A description of purpose, scope, process, schedule and credentials of the speaker needs to accompany the request for clock hour approval

The “Request for Clock Hours Form” should be filled out for these programs giving a thorough description of the program and process. Submit the form to the Coordinator of Catechist Formation for approval.

# **PARTNERSHIP IN CATECHESIS**

## **PARTNERSHIPS IN CATECHESIS: The Archdiocese, the Parish and the School**

“Catechesis is not accomplished in isolation but requires the collaboration and partnership of many people and ministries who provide invaluable support. It is a responsibility of the entire Christian community. It arises from the particular context of relationships so that all who are catechized are welcomed into the life of the community and can live as fully as possible what they have learned.” CT 24)

The Division of Religious Education is “the means which the Bishop as head of the community and teacher of doctrine utilizes to direct and moderate all the catechetical activities of the diocese.” (GCD 126) Hence, the charge of the Division of Religious Education is to provide programs and services for growth in catechetical formation. As important as this task is, however, it is a subsidiary one to the role of the parish and the school.

“The parish is the most important focus in which the Christian community catechizes by its faith, witness, and service.” (GCD 257) A vibrant and faith-filled community is an essential component of catechetical efforts. It is, therefore, important that a parish never ceases its own renewal efforts and upholds catechesis as a vital and essential priority of parish life.

Parishes and schools provide the environment for personal growth, inspiration, education and spiritual nourishment. It remains the task of each local community to select and support the catechists that they call forth to lead adults, youth and children to a fuller and deeper understanding of the Lord Jesus and the message of the Gospel.

### **SELECTION OF CATECHISTS**

The actual selection of persons to be involved in a parish or school catechetical program is the responsibility of the pastor and the parish DRE/CRE/ARE where appropriate, or the pastor and school principal in parish schools or the principal in regional schools, or private schools.

The specific way in which we live out our baptismal call to ministry should be one that best reflects the God given gifts and talents of each individual. In some instances an individual's gifts and talents may best be served in a ministry other than that of catechist.

It is extremely important to help an individual discern the proper use of their gifts less the ministry and the individual suffer. The decision about whether a person should serve as a catechist in a particular parish or school is properly the responsibility of appropriate leaders in the parish or school.

### **SUPPORT OF CATECHISTS**

It is highly important that a parish or school support its catechists as much as possible by providing:

- Public recognition and affirmation by the parish or school community of the important responsibilities catechists have.
- Access to information regarding catechist formation opportunities.
- An accurate record of participation in catechetical formation opportunities and length of service in catechetical ministry.
- Encouragement and assistance in implementing these Catechist Certification Regulations.
- Spiritual opportunities for catechists to grow.
- Financial support to participate in opportunities for catechist certification and continuing enrichment as catechists.
- Adequate facilities, budget, resources, library and media equipment for the proper implementation of catechesis.

Catechists, indeed, are front-line apostles without whom “Churches that are flourishing today would not have been built up.” (CT. 66) Catechists and teachers in the schools and parishes should have a place of honor in their communities because they have such an important role in proclaiming the gospel. (cf. GC 33)

## CONCLUSION

### *We Remember, We Celebrate, We Believe and We Commit*

The American Bishops in their statement *In Support of Catechetical Ministry*, used the above words to describe and uphold the ministry of catechesis. We, too, in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, remember, celebrate, believe and commit.

**We remember** all of the catechists, gone before us, who proclaimed God's Word throughout the ages. Some willingly gave their lives on behalf of the Gospel. Others were imprisoned for their beliefs. Some were ridiculed for their beliefs; and others stood tall and firm in their faith, while all witnessed to the power of Jesus Christ.

**We celebrate** the gift of faith that has been preserved throughout the ages. We celebrate the gift of our families, our parish and school communities that work so hard to witness and proclaim the Gospel. We celebrate all committed to the Ministry of the Word.

**We believe** that the Holy Spirit resides within us and will continue to guide us as we move forward in this new millennium. We believe that the ministry of catechesis is "a work of the Holy Spirit, a work that he alone can initiate and sustain." (CT 72) We believe that catechesis shapes the minds, hearts and spirits of believers, and forms them as disciples (cf. GDC 87). We believe that the Holy Spirit will continue to move the hearts and minds of all who are called to this Ministry of the Word.

**We commit** the support and services of the Division of Religious Education and the Archdiocese of Baltimore. We commit ourselves to assist you in formation for our catechetical leaders and catechists for all age levels so that they can serve the Church competently. We commit ourselves to pray for our faith-filled, responsible and dynamic catechists who work enthusiastically and joyfully in our church.

*We remember you,  
we celebrate you,  
we believe in you,  
and we commit ourselves to you!*



# APPENDIX

## PROGRAMS APPROVED FOR CLOCK HOURS

### ECHOES OF FAITH

<b>Message of Catechesis</b>	<b>4 Hours—Area D—each module</b>
I Believe/We Believe	
Liturgy and Sacraments	
Catholic Morality	
Prayer and Spirituality	
Introduction to the Scriptures	
<b>Catechist As A Person of Faith</b>	<b>2 Hours—Area A—each module</b>
The Roles of the Catechist	
The Person of the Catechist	
<b>Process and Context of Catechesis</b>	
Getting Started as A Catechist	<b>2 Hours—Area C</b>
Methods for Each Grade Level:	
Grade 1-2	<b>2 Clock Hours: 1 Area B &amp; 1 Area C</b>
Grade 3-4	<b>2 Clock Hours: 1 Area B &amp; 1 Area C</b>
Grade 5-6	<b>2 Clock Hours: 1 Area B &amp; 1 Area C</b>
Grade 7-8	<b>2 Clock Hours: 1 Area B &amp; 1 Area C</b>
(Catechists should only use the module for their particular grade level)	
<b>Person Being Catechized</b>	
Human Growth & Development	<b>4 Clock Hours—Area B</b>

## CHURCH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

### Part I

#### CLI Core Curriculum

Theology for Ministry	<b>20 Hours—Area D</b>
Theology for Leadership	<b>No Clock Hours</b>
Spirituality for Ministry	<b>20 Hours—Area A</b>

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### Part II

#### Ministry Track Theology Courses

Church and Ministry	<b>All theology courses are 20 hours in Area D</b>
Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament	
Christian Scriptures/New Testament	
Trinity and Christology	
Liturgy and Sacraments	
Moral Theology	
Catholic Social Teachings	
Critical Moments in Church History	
History and Theology of Spirituality	
Level Three: Spirituality	

#### Ministry Skills Courses

Evangelization in the Parish  
Parish Ministry to the Sick and the Bereaved  
Ministry to the Imprisoned  
Parish Social Ministry  
Liturgy in the Parish  
Religious Education in the Parish

Clock hours for the Ministry Skills Courses may be granted on an individual basis.

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For information concerning academic credit from the College of Notre Dame for any of these courses, contact the Division of Leadership Development at 410-547-5470.

## **SUGGESTED TOPIC AREAS FOR ONGOING GROWTH**

### **AREA A—Catechist As A Person of Faith**

- Retreats—Parish, retreat houses, school retreats etc.
- Applying the Scriptures to every day life
- Parish Missions
- Learning and experiencing various prayer styles
- Growth in communication/listening skills
- Talks on Spirituality, Vocation, Living out our Christian lives
- Opportunities for reflection on one's faith life and personal spirituality
- Catholic bible study and reflection

### **AREA B –Person Being Catechized**

- Faith development of children
- Process of adult, young adult, adolescent and child learning
- Physical, psychological, moral and spiritual development
- Multi-Intelligences
- Right brain learning and spirituality
- Learning disabilities
- Special needs education
- Impact of family, society and culture and environment
- Looking at family life from various perspectives

### **AREA C—Context and Process of Catechesis**

- Church documents on catechetics
- Effective lesson development
- Learning environment
- Classroom management
- Discipline
- Use of media and resources in catechesis
- Catechetical activities for various levels
- Understanding the role of family and community in catechesis
- Leading prayer in the classroom
- Preparing liturgies
- Use of technology in the classroom
- Service and outreach activities
- Catechetical and formational field trips
- Teaching the message
- Teaching methods for special needs

## **AREA D—Message of Catechesis**

- Exploring various church documents
- Study of Scripture—various books of the Bible, Hebrew Scriptures, Christian Scriptures
- Morality
- Liturgy
- Church History
- Basic Church Doctrine
- The Creed: Trinitarian and Christocentric
- Prayers of the Church
- Sacraments—Initiation, Healing and Service
- Ecclesiology
- Jesus Christ
- Catholic Social Teachings
- Mary and the Saints
- Paschal Mystery
- Liturgical Year



## ADDITIONAL CHURCH DOCUMENTS

In planning catechist formation opportunities for your catechists, the following bibliography may be helpful.

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, U.S. Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, 1988.

*To Teach As Jesus Did*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), 1972.

*Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education*, NCCB, 1973.

*The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis*, National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry, 1986.

*The Religious Dimension of Education in A Catholic School*, Catholic Education Congregation, 1988.

*Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*, NCCB, 1999.

*Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults*, NCCB, 1996.

*Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities*, NCCB, 1998.

*Follow The Way of Love: A Pastoral Message to Families*, NCCB, 1993.

*A Family Perspective in Church and Society*, Committee on Marriage and Family, USCCB, 1998.



**FORMAT FOR REQUESTING APPROVAL  
OF CATECHIST TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR  
CATECHIST CERTIFICATION**

Parishes, regions and vicariates designing Catechist Formation programs or workshops should consult the following documents and directives in order to assure a coherent and faith-filled process for their catechists. Topics should not be chosen at random but developed with a formation plan in mind. The level and experience of the catechists must be recognized each time a program is presented to assure that spiritual, cognitive and pedagogical formation is taking place.

**GCD – *General Directory for Catechesis*: Paragraphs 237 through 247**  
**NCD – *National Catechetical Directory*: Sections 178, 181, 231, and 215**  
***Faith Lived—Faith Shared* – Section 5 – Areas of Growth**

In seeking approval for clock hours towards Catechist Certification, the following information is needed:

1. **TITLE or TOPIC of Program:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **DATE(S) (Including year):** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **PLACE(S):** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **TIME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **PARTICIPANTS:** \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Who will be the Leader(s) of the session(s) of this program?**

**NAME**

**Current Theological Experience/Degrees**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. **Give a full description of the topic area:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If the workshop/course is more than one evening, attach a sheet of paper giving a description of the content for each session.**

8. **Books, Documents, Audio-Visual Materials, other resources to be used:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Please attach a schedule and describe briefly the **PROCESS** to be followed in this program (i.e. film/discussion/talk/questions/OR Personal reflection/Small Group Discussion/Presentation/Work Groups/ Home Reading Assignments, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. What is the **TOTAL NUMBER OF CLOCK HOURS** towards catechist certification requested for this program?

Clock Hours \_\_\_\_\_

To which of the following Areas of Growth (cf. Section 5 of *FAITH LIVED—FAITH SHARED*) will the above total number of clock hours relate? (Please note, while an individual program may be all in one Area of Growth, a particular catechist should have a balanced training in all four areas. Indicate the number of hours in only those areas which apply.)

- A. Catechist as Person \_\_\_\_\_ Clock Hours
  - B. Person Being Catechized \_\_\_\_\_ Clock Hours
  - C. Context and Process \_\_\_\_\_ Clock Hours
  - D. Message of Catechesis \_\_\_\_\_ Clock Hours
- Of Catechesis

Who is the Contact Person for this program? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

The information on this form accurately reflects the intended design of this program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Person Seeking Approval)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title / Position)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parish / School)

Return form to: Coordinator of Catechist Formation  
Division of Religious Education  
320 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City/Town)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Zip Code)

\_\_\_\_\_  
( E-mail address)

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

(Please do not write below this line)

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Hours Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Notification sent: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

**CATECHIST CERTIFICATION**

**The first three levels build one upon the other.**

<b>LEVELS</b>	<b>INITIAL HOURS / CREDITS</b>	<b>AREAS OF GROWTH MINIMUMS</b>	<b>EXPIRES</b>	<b>RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATION</b>	30 Clock Hours	5 Hours in each area of growth	3 Years	Not Renewable
<b>CATECHIST CERTIFICATION</b>	60 Clock Hours	10 Hours in each area of growth	5 Years	20 Hours – minimum of 3 in each area of growth
<b>ADVANCED CATECHIST CERTIFICATION</b>	100 Clock Hours	15 Hours in each area of growth	5 Years	20 Hours – minimum of 3 in each area of growth
<b>PROFESSIONAL CATECHIST CERTIFICATE</b>	18 Academic Credits	2 Credits in each area of growth	10 Years	6 Academic Credits <b>or</b> 60 Hours <b>or</b> credits/hours: 1 Credit = 10 clock hours
<b>Catechist Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis</b>	60 Clock Hours	10 Hours in each area of growth	5 Years	20 Hours – minimum of 3 in each area of growth with a focus on adult catechesis
<b>Advanced Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis</b>	100 Clock Hours	15 Hours in each area of growth	5 Years	20 Hours – minimum of 3 in each area of growth with a focus on adult catechesis
<b>Professional Catechist Certificate with a Specialization in Adult Catechesis</b>	18 Academic Credits	2 Credits in each area of growth with a focus on adult catechesis	10 Years	6 academic credits or 60 clock hours or credit/hours with a focus on adult catechesis. Balance in 4 areas of growth
<b>Catechist Certificate with a Specialization with Persons with Disabilities</b>	60 Clock Hours	10 hours in each area of growth	5 Years	20 Hours – minimum of 3 in each area of growth with focus on persons with disabilities

**NOTE:**

Applications for Catechist Certification are due in the office of the Division of Religious Education by March 15 each year. Applications may be sent in any time during the year. However, applications received after March 15<sup>th</sup> will be processed the following year.

When applying for PROFESSIONAL CATECHIST CERTIFICATION, a copy of the transcript(s) from each college attended must be included with the application.

When utilizing academic credits for any level of certification, a copy of the transcript must be included with the application.

For further information about and assistance in implementing these regulations, contact:

The Coordinator of Catechist Formation  
The Division of Religious Education  
320 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

(410-547-5403)

Approved:



Archbishop of Baltimore

Date: September 14, 2001

**The Division of Religious Education  
is a Division of the  
Department of Catholic Education Ministries**

**Archdiocese of Baltimore**