



June 6, 2012

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we in the Diocese of Madison participate in the Universal Church's preparation for the Year of Faith, it is joyfully fitting that we promulgate our new Catechetical Standards for grades pre-K through 8. I am grateful to the staffs of the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis and the Office of Catholic Schools, along with the many pastors, parents, directors, coordinators, principals, and catechists working in our Catholic schools and parish programs who have taken part in developing these solid standards based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

In calling for a Year of Faith, Pope Benedict XVI echoes the words of Blessed John Paul the Great in declaring the Second Vatican Council "the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century," and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as "one of the most important fruits" of this Council which "will make a very important contribution to that work of renewing the whole life of the Church." In the *Catechism*, our Holy Father declares, we have "a precious and indispensable tool" for all people to not only "arrive at a systematic knowledge of the content of the faith," but to authentically encounter the person of Jesus Christ "who lives within the Church" (*Porta Fidei*, 5, 11).

In drawing generously and systemically from Sacred Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, these new standards offer an excellent foundation for drawing all participants, catechists and students alike, into deeper communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ, for "only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity" (Bl. John Paul II, *On Catechesis in Our Time*, 5).

My sincere gratitude also extends to all of our catechetical instructors in schools and parishes who have accepted this call of Jesus Christ, and the significant challenge that goes with it, to hand on the faith in our current culture which often sends a confusing message contrary to the truth of the Gospel. In accepting this challenge and privilege, our catechists follow in the footsteps of all of those who came before us and taught the faith fully revealed by Jesus Christ and professed and guarded by the Apostles and their successors. This mission is one of inestimable importance which naturally calls the individual to a special discipleship of deeper formation and communion with Jesus Christ, for only in this way "will catechists find light and strength for an authentic, desirable renewal of catechesis" (*On Catechesis in Our Time*, 9).

Asking God's blessings upon all our parish and school catechists in this vital Christian mission, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert C. Morlino".

The Most Rev. Robert C. Morlino
Bishop of Madison

O F F I C E O F T H E B I S H O P

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