



Diocese of Austin

Office of Evangelization and Catechesis

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The call to evangelize and to catechize is not the work of one parish leader but is rather a collaborative effort calling for a partnership between the diocese, clergy, catechetical and evangelization leadership and the entire parish community. "All members of the community of believers in Jesus Christ participate in the Church's catechetical mission" (NDC, p. 217).

Through the collaborative efforts of the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, the DRE Deanery Representative Board and many others, we are pleased to present to you the Director of Religious Education Manual and Religious Education Guidelines for the Diocese of Austin. This project is the result of hard work and a prayerful reflection upon the importance of religious education in the life of God's people in the Church.

This manual provides valuable information, practical assistance and directives for all parish programs of catechesis, youth ministry, and evangelization. The list of textbooks that have been endorsed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and approved for use in the Diocese of Austin is also included as well as the curriculum.

The purpose of this manual is to provide greater unity and consistency in the religious education programs throughout the Diocese of Austin. It is a resource for priests, deacons, religious, Directors of Religious Education and catechists. This manual contains several resources and should be used as a reference in conjunction with the diocesan website of the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis. The website will be the live document and as updates occur to any section of the manual those changes will be made on the corresponding web page.

It is essential that every parish catechetical program take into consideration the role of parents as primary educators of their children and involve parents in the catechetical formation of their children. Parents form foundational values and beliefs from the earliest beginnings of life. They are "the most influential agents of catechesis for their children" and "catechize primarily by the witness of their Christian lives and by their love for the faith" (NDC, p. 234). Adult faith formation programs for the whole community are some ways which the Director of Religious Education can assist parents and families in their faith journey.

I am profoundly grateful to all those who have dedicated time and effort and have contributed their gifts and talents to develop this much needed resource. Thank you to the Evangelization & Catechesis staff, Maryrae Stein, Carolyn Martinez and Sue Durango. I am also grateful to our DRE Representative Board for all their input.

My hope is that this manual will be a valuable ministerial reference tool. Please know that our office is ready to assist you to utilize this manual to serve the faithful of the Diocese of Austin.

Sincerely,

Gustavo Rodriguez
Director of Evangelization & Catechesis

