

Greetings Pastors and Directors of Religious Education,

The Diocese of Bismarck has recently completed a process to identify the top curricula options, for grades 1-6, that are available to our Diocese for catechesis. Using a review committee made up of pastors, DREs, and catechists, we reviewed 6 curriculum options in total, many of which are being used currently at parishes across our diocese. For each curriculum, 2 sample lessons were provided to the committee members that included both the student text, catechist text, and any additional materials included in the lessons. The curricula were evaluated on the following areas: 1) layout/flow of the sample lessons, 2) activities included in each lesson, 3) content and substance included for the topic/theme of the lesson, 4) pictures included in the lesson, 5) writing style of the curriculum, 6) the catechist guide (structure, layout, ease of use), 7) the student book (structure, layout, readability), 8) family/parent/take-home components, and 9) age appropriateness of the lessons.

Based on the evaluations and feedback provided by the committee members, the top three curricula chosen were: **Alive in Christ (Our Sunday Visitor), Spirit of Truth (Sophia Press), and Faith & Life (Ignatius Press).**

We feel it is important to narrow down the number of curricula being used across our diocese, to create consistency and so that we can better serve, train and support our pastors, DREs and catechists. We also want to be sure that the curricula used to teach our young people the faith, contain adequate substance and convey the richness of the faith in a way that is going to be relevant, relatable, and tangible to our young people, without underestimating their ability to know and understand the teachings of the Church.

Based on the results of the committee, we would ask each parish to choose one of the three curricula to use for K-6 catechesis. Sacramental prep can still utilize other resources/curricula and parishes are welcome to continue doing Catechesis of the Good Shepherd or A Family of Faith (for family faith formation). If a parish is strongly against using one of the three chosen curricula, you may request special approval from Bishop Kagan to use something else. But we strongly encourage you to consider using one of the three listed above.

We understand that a transition period is necessary for changing curriculum, so we would ask that parishes make the switch by Fall 2020. The Diocese of Bismarck Office of Catechesis and Youth will begin to provide additional resources and training opportunities regarding these three curricula in the coming months. Please consider utilizing these opportunities, and you may also contact the Office of Catechesis and Youth for questions, to review samples of the curricula, or for any other needs you might have regarding the curricula options.

Thank you for all that you do to support our young people across the Diocese of Bismarck!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+1 David D. Kagan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

The Most Reverend David D. Kagan
Bishop of Bismarck

Carrie Davis