

WHAT DOES HOMESCHOOLING FOR RELIGION COVER?

Like all catechesis, homeschooling for religion includes:

- Promoting knowledge of faith.
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of liturgy and sacraments.
- Learning to pray.
- Educating for life in the Christian community and for participation in the life and mission of the Church.
- Preparing us for taking our place as Christians and disciples in the world.

WHAT PARENTS WHO HOME-SCHOOL FOR RELIGION CAN EXPECT FROM THEIR LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

- Hospitality and support from their parish
- Participation in the parish sacramental preparation opportunities
- Clear expectations regarding curriculum and benchmarks for excellence
- Texts, materials and resources to use in their homeschooling
- Regular meetings with the parish catechetical leader or master teacher
- Formation for themselves as catechists of their children
- Gatherings of families engaged in homeschooling
- Information and support to present HIV Aids curriculum, *Creating a Safe Environment* materials and human sexuality education

Homeschooling for religion is both a privilege and a responsibility. Families and parishes together can strive to make this experience rich and rewarding for all who participate. Let's embrace this graced opportunity together!

WHAT PARENTS WHO HOME-SCHOOL FOR RELIGION SHOULD KNOW.

1. Families need to register with the parish Catechetical leader.
2. Texts used for homeschooling for religion should be the same text used by the parish
3. Families who participate in homeschooling for religion are expected to participate in the life and worship of the parish community.
4. Parishes must provide texts and resource materials including Catechist Master Books for Homeschooling families. A small fee to cover materials may be charged.
5. The diocesan religion curriculum serves as the standard for content.
6. Parents must meet with the parish Catechetical Leader or the pastor at least twice a year.
7. Children who are homeschooled for academic subjects as well as for religion must include safe environment information in their study.
8. Preparation for sacraments is a joint responsibility of the parents and the parish. Therefore, children will participate in the parish sacramental preparation programs.
9. Families who homeschool should participate in family or /intergenerational programs on a regular basis.
10. Parishes will establish standards for "moving up" in the homeschooling process.

**Dept. of Evangelization & Catechesis
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Homeschooling

FOR RELIGION



**An Authentic Option
for
Faith Formation
in the
Diocese of Rochester**

Homeschooling For Religion

Welcome Catholic parents! *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* recognizes and honors parents as important in the formation in faith of their children. (CCC2223) All Catholic parents have a responsibility as first or primary educators of their children, a responsibility they undertook when they requested baptism for them. (*Rite of Baptism of Children, #56*) As first educators in faith for their children, parents establish a loving and faith filled home where children experience love, reconciliation, respect, fidelity and commitment to serving God by serving others. (CCC 2223) At the same time, the Church promises to help parents in fostering the faith of their children. (NDC 54, C) As children grow, many parents choose Catholic schools or parish catechetical programs to nurture the budding faith of their children. Some parents/guardians make the decision to homeschool their children for religion, that is, to provide intentional and systematic catechesis for their children at home rather than as part of a regular parish based catechetical program or through a Catholic School education.

The Church recognizes and honors this commitment. Indeed the Diocese of Rochester welcomes parents/guardians who want to provide homeschooling for religion and pledges to support them in their responsibility to provide authentic and complete catechesis for their children. We are committed to providing the leadership, resources and training to assure excellence in faith formation for their children.

Our support of parents/guardians who choose to homeschool their children for religion flows from the Church's desire to support the parents of the children in their desire to catechize their children and from each Bishop's responsibility to serve as Chief Catechist of his local Church.

The Aim of Catechesis

All catechesis has at its heart the fostering of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ resulting in disciples who go forward to spread the Good News of Salvation throughout the world. All formation in faith is directed toward making disciples, whether it is at home, at the local parish or in a Catholic school.

Roles in Homeschooling for Religion

The Bishop is Chief Catechist of the Diocese and has formation for the people of his diocese as his concern. The Bishop is charged with the responsibility to provide guidelines, curricula and standards for the formation of children and for the training of teachers of religion. He makes certain that texts and materials for catechesis contain the complete and authentic teaching of the Church. The Bishop is assisted in this responsibility by the local pastor who provides for the education in faith of the faithful in his parish.



The Pastor and Priests Pope John Paul II said it best: "All believers have a right to catechesis; All pastors have the duty to provide it." (*Catechesi Tradendae* 64) *Pastors and Priests* share in the teaching role of the Bishop and they ensure that their faith communities provide a plan for comprehensive and systematic catechesis for all the people of the parish. (Canon 777).

The Local Parish The Church recognizes that the local Parish is critical to formation in faith. People of faith need to live in communion, to hear together the Word of God proclaimed, and to move together toward building the Kingdom of God. (*Catechesi Tradendae* # 24)



It is in the local community that faith is nurtured. The role of the community is to support and welcome all those who are growing in knowledge and love of the Word of God and growing in relationship to Jesus Christ.

Parents (and guardians) who choose to homeschool for religion are assisted in this responsibility by the local parish. *The General Directory for Catechesis* puts it this way:

The home based catechesis of children is a cooperative effort between the children, their parents, parish leadership, and the diocesan bishop. Parents who choose to be not only the primary educators of their children but also their catechists must adhere to all guidelines for catechists as outlined by the diocesan bishop.

(GDC 61,3)

The Parish Catechetical Leader has been charged by the local pastor/pastoral administrator to direct the catechetical efforts of the parish. With the pastor/pastoral administrator, the parish catechetical leader establishes standards and guidelines for catechesis and sacramental preparation.

Parents and Guardians

who elect to homeschool for religion are assuming the responsibility to be catechists of their children. They are in partnership with their local Bishop, their pastors and their parishes to assure excellence in formation in faith for children.

