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## **DIOCESAN GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING YOUR CHILD AT HOME (HOME SCHOOLING)**

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With the guidance from the United States bishops in the National Directory for Catechesis, the Office of Faith Formation for the Diocese of Rockville Centre provides the following guidelines for those parents wishing to catechize their own child/children in the home. The National Directory for Catechesis states that *“all parents have an obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the church. Since their children are being initiated into the life of the Church, which is fundamentally realized in the local parish, parents who provide catechesis for their children in their homes should participate fully in the life of the local parish. They should celebrate the Sunday Eucharist in the local parish, involve themselves in its charitable works, and attend appropriate training and formation sessions the parish or diocese provides.”* (NDC #3, pg. 260)

While we recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children and that some parents may *“choose to provide catechesis for their children in their home, their catechesis must be both complete and authentic.”* There may be extraordinary circumstances whereby some families may need to “home school” their children. *“Parents who choose to be not only the primary educators of their children but also their catechists must adhere to all guidelines for catechists outlined by the diocesan bishop.”* (NDC #3, pg. 259) It must be understood that these efforts cannot be done independently of the parish.

1. The parent must formally register their child in the Religious Education Program.
2. The parent must notify the Pastor and the Catechetical Leader by writing a letter stating the reason why they want to catechize their child in their home. The Pastor will make the final decision whether catechesis in the home is allowed.

- 3. Due to the communal nature of the Sacraments it's strongly recommended that a parent does not request to catechize their child in their home during sacramental preparation years. The following exceptions will only be made in extraordinary circumstances.**
- 4. The parent must meet with the Catechetical Leader to discuss plans for instruction.**
- 5. Children catechized at home by parents are expected to meet the same requirements as all the other children in the parish. The following requirements are set forth by each individual parish.**
  - **Mass/Liturgy**
  - **Retreats**
  - **Interviews for Sacramental Readiness**
  - **Rehearsals for Sacramental Celebrations**
  - **Service Projects**
- 6. Textbooks used at home by the parent and child must be the same as those used in the parish and must be in conformity with the teachings of the Catholic Church.**
- 7. Children who are catechized in the home are required to meet with the Catechetical Leaders for periodic assessments to ensure that progress is being made.**
- 8. Parent catechists are expected to participate in catechist meetings and catechetical formation programs offered in the parish and through the Office of Faith Formation.**
- 9. Parents will be responsible to attend all of the parent meetings in preparation for the sacraments.**
- 10. In the event of a continuation of extraordinary circumstances, please note that all requests for catechesis in the home must be resubmitted annually.**