

PERSONNEL
BK3§300

This section sets policy for all individuals ministering within the diocese in any of the programs listed in Policy BK3§101.1

For catechesis to be effective, the catechist must be fully committed to Jesus Christ. Faith must be shared with conviction, joy, love, enthusiasm and hope. “The summit and center of catechetical formation lies in an aptitude and ability to communicate the Gospel message.”¹ This is possible only when the catechist believes in the Gospel and its power to transform lives. To give witness to the Gospel, the catechist must establish a living, ever-deepening relationship with the Lord. He or she must be a person of prayer, one who frequently reflects on the Scriptures and whose Christ-like living testifies to deep faith. Only men and women of faith can share faith with others, preparing the setting so that people can respond in faith to God’s grace.

The fulfillment of the unique goals of Catholic education rests largely in the hands of the catechists. The beliefs and values of each person, exemplified through his/her professional and private lives, play an essential part in the educational process. It is important, therefore, that all engaged in the catechetical ministry of the diocese give assurance that they understand what it means to be a catechist in the catechetical mission of the Church. Each catechist shares in the catechetical ministry of the Church; each is expected to contribute toward its catechetical objectives.

BK3§301.1.1 Policy

The catechist must be a **PERSON OF FAITH** who:

- Regards him/herself as a teacher of the Gospel message and gives witness by his/her speech, actions and attitudes to the doctrine and moral standards of the Catholic Church
- Is conscious of the significant role religion plays in the development of the whole person and seeks ways to integrate Christian values in the process of teaching and responsibilities assumed, thereby fostering a faith that is living, conscious and active
- Inspires and motivates students in age-appropriate ways to reach their full potential spiritually, academically and socially
- Continuously strives to acquire new skills and techniques in mastering the subject matter and in keeping pace with the development of all aspects of Catholic catechesis
- Regards the Catholic catechetical apostolate, not as a job to be done, but as a vocation to be lived

The catechist must be a **COMMUNITY BUILDER** who:

- Supports efforts to form a strong faith community among faculty, students, parents and the larger community of which it is a part
- As a member of a team, works well with the pastor/ catechetical administrator(s) and other members of the staff on behalf of the catechetical needs of the students and parish community

¹ Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetical Directory* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1971), n. 111

COMMUNITY BUILDER *Continued*

- Makes a positive contribution to the morale, spirit and image of the catechetical programs
- Maintains a pleasant teaching environment
- Treats students with respect and works cooperatively with parents/legal guardians

The catechist must be a leader in **CHRISTIAN SERVICE** who:

- Is generous and unselfish with his/her time in responding to the needs of staff, students and parents
- Models Christ's commandment to love God and others through their actions and concerns for the needs of others
- Seeks concrete ways to develop in his/her students a Christian social consciousness and concern for the needs of others
- Works to eliminate prejudice and injustice in the parish community
- Believes that Catholic education has a unique contribution to make to society and works to promote the values of Catholic education; in the civic community
- Helps the students grow in their commitment to service of God, one another, the Church and the general community

The catechist must be an active participant in the **WORSHIPING COMMUNITY** who:

- Models in his/her own life the values and the practice of worship and prayer
- Contributes to liturgical and prayer experiences
- Leads his/her students in prayer experiences
- Provides his/her students with examples and models of liturgical and prayer experiences

In addition, "The spiritual life of a catechist shall be characterized by:

- A love of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and of Christ's Church, our Holy Father, and God's holy people
- A coherence and authenticity of life that is characterized by their faithful practice of the faith in a spirit of faith, charity, hope, courage, and joy
- Personal prayer and dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church
- A missionary zeal by which they are fully convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith and enthusiastically proclaim it
- Active participation of their local parish community, especially by attendance at Sunday Eucharist
- A devotion to Mary, the first disciple and the model of catechists, and to the Most Holy Eucharist, the source of nourishment for catechists."²

2 Cf. Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Guide for Catechists* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB, 1993 nos. 7-10 as found in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Directory for Catechesis* §54.B8 (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005)

BK3§302.1 QUALITIES

Commentary

Pastors/catechetical administrators have the responsibility to consider the moral and religious attitudes and character of all persons who want to begin or continue to teach in catechetical programs. The Catholic catechetical mission seeks to integrate religious truths and values with the rest of life, most importantly by the presence of catechists who uphold and exhibit the teachings of the Church in their private and professional lives.

BK3§302.1.1 Policy

Every effort shall be made to employ catechists who live and share the Catholic faith. Non-Catholic teachers may be employed only if they can support and cooperate with this effort. Persons teaching religion/theology must be “practicing Catholics who participate fully in the communal worship and life of the Church and who have been prepared for their apostolate by appropriate catechetical training.”³

BK3§302.2 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BK3§302.2.1 Policy

In employment practices, a Catholic institution shall not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, disability, or national and ethnic origin.

BK3§302.2.2 Policy

As an integral part of the Catholic catechetical mission which seeks to integrate religious truths and values with the rest of life, most importantly by the presence of catechists who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives, prospective teachers shall be questioned whether or not they can support and cooperate with this effort.

BK3§302.3 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

BK3§302.3.1 Policy

In conjunction with the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator, the interviewing, hiring, supervising and dismissing of personnel for the catechetical program is the responsibility of the appropriate catechetical administrator.

Procedures

The appropriate diocesan office or the director of the Office for Human Resources may be called if there are any questions.

The offices will assist local parishes and will provide in-service for groups in personnel searches and the recruiting of catechists.

³ United State Conference of Catholic Bishops, *NDC*, §54.B8

BK3§302.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

BK3§302.4.1 Policy

All catechists shall be directly accountable to the appropriate catechetical administrator as determined by the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator in conjunction with the principal and the director of religious education.

BK3§302.5 PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

BK3§302.5.1 Policy

Every catechist shall engage in programs of religious and professional growth.

Procedure

The catechist, in consultation with the appropriate catechetical administrator, will review his/her program of growth annually.

BK3§302.6 FORMATION OF CATECHISTS

Commentary

*This policy applies to all individuals ministering within the diocese in any of the programs listed in Policy **Bk3§101**.*

BK3§302.6.1 Policy

All catechists, teachers and aides shall complete and maintain the advanced level of the diocesan Catechist Formation Process.

BK3§302.7 CONTRACTS

BK3§302.7.1 Policy

All salaried personnel in catechetical programs shall be under annual contract.

Procedure

All contracts are between the individual person and the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator (or in the case of non-parish programs, the board or catechetical administrator). No other person may authorize or enter into a contract. The appropriate catechetical administrator is to attest to the contract.

BK3§302.7.2 Policy

All programs shall use contract forms that have been approved by the diocese.

Procedure

Contact the offices for appropriate forms. See the Minimum Lay Teachers Salary Scale and Catechist Addendum for the minimum compensation for school teachers who have completed the various levels of the diocesan Catechist Formation Process.

BK3§302.8 TENURE**BK3§302.8.1 Policy**

The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois and all Catholic elementary and secondary schools do not have a policy of tenure for personnel in the catechetical mission of the diocese, therefore tenure shall not be granted at the local level.

BK3§302.8.2 Policy

All personnel contracts must be annual contracts and do not imply automatic renewal.

Procedure

It is the decision of the appropriate catechetical administrator whether or not the contract is to be offered.

BK3§302.9 FAILURE TO FULFILL A CONTRACT**BK3§302.9.1 Policy**

The salaried employee who has signed a contract may not terminate employment during the term of the contract except by written mutual agreement of the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator, appropriate catechetical administrator, as suitable, and the employee. Documentation of same will be placed in the person's personnel file.

Procedure

If a teacher breaks an employment contract, the school may also notify the Licensure Section of the Illinois State Board of Education.

BK3§302.10 CATECHIST DISMISSAL/NOT OFFERING A NEW CONTRACT FOR A SUBSEQUENT YEAR**BK3§302.10.1 Policy**

If it becomes apparent that a catechist's performance does not meet the religious or professional standards required, every care must be taken by the appropriate supervising catechetical administrator to document his/her deficiencies and to insure the catechist is treated with fairness. The catechist shall be told of the problem and given an opportunity to discuss the problem and to improve or change within a specified time frame.

BK3§302.10.2 Policy

Grounds for dismissal during the contractual year or not offering a new contract for a subsequent year must be in accord with established diocesan and local policies and current contract obligations after appropriate evaluations.

Reasons for dismissal during the year or not offering a new contract for a subsequent year, include, but are not to be limited to:

- Violation of accepted academic or professional standards of conduct
- Failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner
- Lack of continuing professional growth and performance
- Consistent non-observance of diocesan and local policies
- Violation of other provisions of the catechist's contract
- Failure to act in accordance with or advocating positions contrary to the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Catholic Church
- Failure to provide leadership in forming the Christian catechetical community
- Gross misconduct

Procedures

1. There is a distinction between not offering a subsequent contract and a dismissal during the period of the contract. The legal ramifications between the two are very different. Dismissal during the contract period must follow the provisions of the contract. Except in extreme cases, service should be ended by not offering a contract for the subsequent year rather than by a dismissal for cause during the year.

Allowing the catechist to resign voluntarily is often the most advantageous action for all concerned. In all cases, when ending any person's employment, matters of justice for both the catechist and the program are the foremost considerations. Therefore, decisions regarding a person's service cannot be made lightly or without planning and preparation.

The key to proper resolution of problems with any catechist is communication and one of the best ways of doing this is by accurate evaluations and careful documentation.

2. The local Reduction in Force and grievance procedures should be followed. Valuable insight, information, assistance and consultation in dealing with appropriate guidance and dismissal procedures can be provided by the director of the diocesan Office for Human Resources.

Bk3§303.1 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**Bk3§303.1.1 Policy**

All teachers who teach within Catholic schools must:

- Have earned a bachelor's degree
- Maintain an appropriate teaching licensure that is recognized as valid and active by Illinois State Board of Education
- Pursue/maintain the appropriate formation through the Diocesan Catechist Formation process

Bk3§303.2 NON-QUALIFIED TEACHERS**Bk3§303.2.1 Policy**

If there are non-degreed teachers currently in our schools who do not meet the professional requirements of **Bk3§303.1.1**, they shall be retained only if they are actively (within 5 years) pursuing licensure per an established education plan.

Bk3§303.2.2 Policy

Vacancies must be filled by appropriately licensed teachers.

Bk3§303.3 PERSONNEL FILES**Bk3§303.3.1 Policy**

Personnel files maintained within the office of each principal for all teachers, other professional staff and para-professional staff must include:

- Evidence of current teaching/professional licensure showing date of renewal
- Evidence of physical and freedom from communicable diseases (and TB test results for cafeteria and preschool employees)
- Evidence of Certification Authorization form that accompanies Pastoral Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel and the Policy on Working with Minors
- Transcripts of all degree work and other course credits
- Application form
- Evidence of past employment references
- Copies of annual contracts
- Job performance evaluations
- Evidence of participation in catechist formation – (permanent record card)
- Evidence of participation in professional development
- Job description
- Evidence of Protecting God's Children training
- Evidence of criminal history search as required by the diocese
- Evidence of fingerprint/background check
- Evidence of OSHA training
- I-9 Forms

Bk3§303.3.1 Policy *continued*

- IDES New Hire Report
- Agreement to abide by handbooks
- DCFS Mandated Reporter Form
- Attendance records
- Internet use policy/Diocesan Information Technology policy/Social Media policy
- Other documentation as specified

Bk3§303.3.2 Policy

The pastor/ catechetical administrator or designee shall have access to personnel file information.

Bk3§303.4 HIRING PROCEDURES**Bk3§303.4.1 Policy**

Prior to hiring, the prospective applicant must sign the Certification and Authorization form that accompanies the Pastoral Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel and the Policy on Working with Minors which are provided by the diocesan Office for Human Resources, and other papers as appropriate.

Procedure

Information can be provided by the diocesan Office for Human Resources. Teacher applicants are to be interviewed by the principal so that credentials and qualifications may be examined and faith commitment determined.

Bk3§303.4.2 Policy

The principal shall recommend an applicant for hiring to the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator (or in the case of non-parish schools, the board).

Bk3§303.5 HEALTH EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL**Bk3§303.5.1 Policy**

All personnel shall conform to current state laws regarding physical fitness and freedom from communicable disease.

Bk3§303.6 LOCAL FACULTY AND STAFF POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**Bk3§303.6.1 Policy**

Every parish catechetical ministry shall have a compilation of written personnel policies and guidelines for faculty, catechists and staff. These policies and guidelines are to be placed in a personnel handbook. Local school policies and guidelines must exist on the following (these may vary in parishes):

- Mission statement
- Philosophy/purpose/objectives of school
- Teaching Duties:
 - Job descriptions
 - Supervision of students (see **Bk3§402.5**)
 - Phone/parent conferences

BK3§303.6.1 Policy *continued*

- Transfer of records
- Record-keeping/grading
- Discipline:
 - Student discipline (see **BK3§407.1**)
 - Student grievance procedures
 - Guidelines for searching/seizing student's belongings
 - Corporal punishment (see **BK3§402.4.2**)
 - Conflict resolution
- Non-teaching duties:
 - Cafeteria/playground/study hall
 - Field trip policies and procedures (see **BK3§408.5, BK3§504.12**)
 - Attendance at faculty/catechist meetings, parent/teacher conferences, parent club meetings, etc.
 - Extra-curricular activities (expectations regarding teachings)
 - Procedures to follow for student illness
 - Building maintenance requests/reports
- Personnel policies:
 - Bereavement leave
 - Child abuse and sexual abuse (see **BK3§408.1**)
 - Mandated reporting (see **BK3§303.9.1**)
 - Leave of absence (FMLA)
 - Non-discrimination in hiring (see **BK3§302.2.1**)
 - Non-tenure and contract renewal (see **BK3§302.7.1, BK3§302.8.1**)
 - Supervision and evaluation (frequency, format) (see **BK3§303.7.1**)
 - Harassment including sexual
 - Sick days; personal days; jury duty
 - Termination (see **BK3§302.10.1**)
 - Military duty
 - Cell phones and other electronics (**BK3§402.9**)
 - Diocesan Information Technology Systems/Social Media policies
 - Reduction in Force procedures
 - Confidentiality
 - Professionalism
 - Loyalty
 - Personal behavior
 - Illegal activity
 - Conflict resolution
 - Grievance procedures
 - Failure to fulfill contract (see **BK3§302.9.1**)
- Handbook:
 - Agreement to abide by the handbook signed by employee
 - Right of administration to amend handbook
 - Employee and fields requiring licensure
 - Internet usage policy including email

Commentary

Any policies from the Diocesan Policies may be repeated verbatim but should be expanded further in the local handbook as needed.

BK3§303.7 EVALUATION

BK3§303.7.1 Policy

Catholic School personnel shall be supervised and evaluated by the principal at least once each school year. The summative instrument by which teacher supervision and evaluation shall take place will be defined by the Office for Catholic Schools.

Procedure

Catechetical administrators may use the evaluation tool of their choice for support personnel.

BK3§303.7.2 Policy

The results of an employee's evaluation shall be shared only with the respective employee and the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator (or in the case of non-parish schools, the board).

BK3§303.8 COMPENSATION

BK3§303.8.1 Policy

A teacher's salary package in the Catholic elementary schools shall be determined using the Minimum Lay Teachers Salary Scale, the Catechist Addendum, and the list of Fringe Benefits as established annually by the bishop of the diocese.

BK3§303.9 MANDATED REPORTING

BK3§303.9.1 Policy

According to the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, school principals and teachers are mandated to report suspicion of abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services.

BK3§303.9.2 Policy

When a teacher reports such suspicion to the Department of Child and Family Services, he/she shall inform the principal of his/her report.

BK3§303.9.3 Policy

If the report of sexual abuse involves Church Personnel as described in **BK2§101** of the Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel, the principal and/or teacher shall also report the incident or suspicion to the Victim Assistance Coordinator as described in **BK2§108.1.2** – Reporting an Incident of the above-mentioned policy.

Commentary

The law indicates reporting is an obligation when a person has “reasonable cause to believe” that abuse or neglect is present. The Department of Children and Family Services may ask that licensure be suspended and/or revoked if it has proof that professional school personnel had knowledge of child abuse and/or neglect and did not report same.

Bk3§304.1 QUALIFICATIONS

Bk3§304.1.1 Policy

All persons who teach in the parish catechetical programs shall be qualified as determined by the Office for Catechesis (See **Bk3§302.6.1**).

Commentary

Ordinarily, the qualified person is one who has completed and maintained the advanced level in the diocesan Catechist Formation Process.

Bk3§304.2 LOCAL PERSONNEL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PARISH CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS

Bk3§304.2.1 Policy Every parish shall have a compilation of written personnel policies and guidelines for catechists. These are to be placed in a personnel handbook. Local policies and guidelines must exist on the following:⁴

Mission statement

Philosophy/purpose/objectives of program

Teaching Duties:

- Job descriptions
- Supervision of students (see **Bk3§402.5.1**)
- Phone/parent conferences
- Transfer of records
- Record-keeping/grading

Discipline:

- Student discipline (see **Bk3§407.1**)
- Student grievance procedures
- Guidelines for searching/seizing student’s belongings
- Corporal punishment (see **Bk3§402.4.2**)
- Conflict resolution

Non-teaching duties:

- Cafeteria/playground
- Field trip policies and procedures (see **Bk3§408.5, Bk3§504.12**)
- Attendance at faculty/catechist meetings, parent/teacher conferences, etc.
- Procedures to follow for student illness
- Building maintenance requests/reports

⁴ This list encompasses recommendations from the following book: *Religious Education, Parish and Youth Ministry: Legal Issues for Catechetical and Youth Leaders* by Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., PhD.

BK3§304.2.1 Policy *continued*

Personnel policies:

- Child abuse and sexual abuse (see **BK3§408.1**)
- Mandated reporting (see **BK3§304.4.1**)
- Non-discrimination (see **BK3§302.2.1**)
- Non-tenure and contract renewal (see **BK3§302.7.1, BK3§302.8.1**)
- Supervision and evaluation (frequency, format) (see **BK3§304.3.1**)
- Harassment including sexual
- Sick days; jury duty
- Termination (see **BK3§302.10.1**)
- Internet usage policy including email
- Cell phones and other electronics (see **BK3§402.9**)
- Diocesan Information Technology Systems policy/Social Media policy
- Confidentiality
- Professionalism
- Loyalty
- Personal behavior
- Illegal activity
- Conflict resolution
- Grievance procedures
- Failure to fulfill contract (see **BK3§302.9**)

Handbook:

- Agreement to abide by the handbook signed by catechist
- Right of administration to amend handbook

Commentary

Any policies from the Diocesan Policies may be repeated verbatim but should be expanded further in the local handbook as needed.

BK3§304.3 EVALUATION

BK3§304.3.1 Policy

Catechists shall be supervised and evaluated annually by the appropriate catechetical administrator.

Procedure

Catechetical administrators are to determine the appropriate evaluation tool to utilize.

BK3§304.3.2 Policy

The results of an individual catechist's evaluation shall be shared only with the respective catechist and the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator.

BK3§304.4 MANDATED REPORTING

Commentary

DREs, CREs, catechists, and other catechetical personnel, while not mandated by state law to report abused and neglected children, are nevertheless to report suspicion of such abuse to the Department of Children and Family Services per the Policy on the Sexual Abuse of Minors.

BK3§304.4.1 Policy

After catechetical personnel report such suspicions to the Department of Children and Family Services, he/she shall inform the pastor, parochial administrator or priest moderator or supervisor.

Commentary

The law indicates reporting is an obligation when a person has “reasonable cause to believe” that abuse or neglect is present.

BK3§304.4.2 Policy

If the report of sexual abuse involves Church Personnel as described in **BK2§108.1** of the *Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel*, the DRE/CRE and/or catechist shall also report the incident or suspicion to the Victim Assistance Coordinator as described in **BK2§108.1.2** – Reporting an Incident of the above-mentioned policy.