



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

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October 1, 2008

Dear Friends in Christ,

In 2005, the United States Catholic Bishops published the National Directory for Catechesis to remind us once again of our responsibility as members of the Church community to grow in the knowledge of the faith and to pass it on to others with the help of God's grace.

All baptized members of the Church have been called to participate actively in the Church's mission of evangelization and catechesis. As Archbishop, it is my duty to ensure that the faith is handed on in its integrity as the Church received it from the Apostles. The clergy, religious, educators and parents are called to collaborate with me - each in a unique way - in this work of religious catechesis.

To assist these efforts the Religious Education Department of the Archdiocese of Miami has for many years provided a Catechist Certification Program. This important program of training and formation is essential for anyone seeking to serve as a catechist, Catholic school teacher, director of religious education or school principal in the Archdiocese of Miami. Recently, the Catechist Certification Program was modified to respond better to the catechetical realities we face today.

I express my thanks and appreciation to all who offer to serve in the work of catechesis. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the great evangelist Saint Paul the Apostle, I trust that the Lord will bless our endeavors to hand on faithfully to the next generation the Catholic faith and teachings we have received.

May the Lord continue to bless you and your loved ones abundantly. With personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,


Archbishop of Miami

Archdiocese of Miami
Religious Education Department
Catechist Certification Courses
Outline ¹

Level One:

(3 courses)

- A. Teaching Religion Today
 - B. Foundations of Catholicism
 - C. Introduction to the Sacraments
- *Receive a satisfactory evaluation of a class observation.

Level Two:

(3 courses)

- A. Introduction to the Old Testament
- B. Introduction to the New Testament
- C. The Church after Vatican II

Level Three:

(3 courses)

- A. Principles of Christian Morality
- B. Christology
- C. St. Paul's Letters

Level Four:

(3 courses)

- A. Living, Loving and Celebrating Liturgy
- B. Becoming Peacemakers
- C. Church History

¹ This proposal has been approved by the Archbishop August 27, 2008. A version with his letter of introduction will be posted on the website very soon.

**ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
CATECHIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

All members of the community of believers in Jesus Christ participate in the Church's catechetical mission. #53 NDC

The U.S. Catholic Bishops in The National Directory for Catechesis published in 2005 laid emphasis on the fundamental tasks of catechesis #20.

Today, as part of a diverse, pluralistic Church of Miami, the Religious Education Department wishes to continue implementing these tasks by offering an intensive formation program to catechists in a local parish, to religion teachers in a Catholic school, and to anyone interested in deepening their knowledge and faith. These courses have been divided into the following four levels.

- Level One:**
- A. Teaching Religion Today
 - B. Foundations of Catholicism
 - C. Introduction to the Sacraments
- *Receive a satisfactory evaluation of a class observation.
- Level Two:**
- A. Introduction to the Old Testament
 - B. Introduction to the New Testament
 - C. The Church after Vatican II
- Level Three:**
- A. Principles of Christian Morality
 - B. Christology
 - C. St. Paul's Letter
- Level Four:**
- A. Living, Loving and Celebrating Liturgy
 - B. Becoming Peacemakers
 - C. Church History

Where are these courses taught? The Pastor or the Parish Director of Religious Education or the School Principal of a Catholic School requests that a course be offered at their parish by completing the request form and submitting it to the Religious Education Department. Location, time, and dates will be arranged.

Each class is 10 hours in length. Usually, classes are scheduled for five sessions, two hours each, with a 15 minute break.

Assignments: Each course has specific assignments that must be completed to obtain a grade from the instructor.

Registration fee: Courses are \$35.00 per student per course. Checks are made payable to: The Archdiocese of Miami

Books/materials used in courses are usually sold before class. The cost varies and is separate from the registration fee.

Summer Institute: Morning and afternoon courses are held in the month of June at both a Catholic Elementary School in Dade and a Catholic Elementary School in Broward. For further information, check with the parish's D.R.E. or School Principal.

Flyers: Most pastors welcome students from other parishes attending a Certification course offered in their parishes. An announcement of courses to be offered is usually mailed/emailed to D.R.E.s and to School Principals. The courses are also announced in The Florida Catholic, the Pastor's Newsletter and on the website of the Department of Religious Education:
www.miamiarchdiocese.org/ReligiousEducation

Observations: An observation is conducted after the student completes the three courses for level one. The School Principal, DRE, or representative does the observation using the form designed by the Religious Education Department. Observations are done on an individual basis. The observation should be sent to the Religious Education Department.

Record Keeping: The Religious Education Department will keep computerized records of courses taken by anyone throughout the school year. Student transcripts are updated and emailed to the Director of Religious Education, School Principal, or certificate coordinator as requested.

Certificates: When a volunteer catechist or a DRE completes a level, a certificate indicating this will be issued.

Standards for a teacher in a Catholic School teaching religion

The Archdiocese of Miami requires that all elementary religion teachers be enrolled in the Religious Education Catechist Certification Program and continue their education according to the following guidelines.

A. The Religion Teacher of one or two classes (1 or 2)

Teachers who do not have a degree in theology or religious studies must complete the basic level of catechist certification within the first two years of hire. (See 3.103 in the Policy Manual of The Department of Schools: Qualifications/Certification for Religion Teachers)

B. The Religion Teacher of three or more classes (3 or more)

The teacher must have a bachelor's degree. If the degree is not in theology or religious studies, the teacher must have completed level one at the time of hire and must have completed all four levels in a diocesan catechist certification

program within the first five years of hire. He/she should continue to show evidence of continuing religious education.

University Credit

The Department can make arrangements with Barry University and St. Thomas University to supplement the 10 hour course with extra work in order to receive one college credit. The student who wishes to earn this credit needs to fill out the appropriate college registration forms and pay the additional tuition. Forms are provided by the instructor on the first day of class.

Barry University – One time application fee \$20.00. Tuition \$25.00 per course credit.
Check is made payable to Barry University

St. Thomas University – Tuition \$50.00 per course credit.
Check is made payable to St. Thomas University

University websites:

By completing an online course at the following universities a teacher can fulfill part of the Certification standards. The following universities offer on-line courses in Religious Studies.

University of Dayton, Ohio (The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation)
<http://campus.udayton.edu>

University of Notre Dame, Indiana
<http://step.nd>. (e-courses)

St. Thomas University, Miami, Florida
<http://stu.edu> (Dept. of Religious Studies-Online Religious Studies Major)

Boston College, Massachusetts (C21 Online)
<http://www.bc.edu/sites/c21online/index.html>

All the forms connected with the Catechist Certification Program are available on the website of the Department of Religious Education and are able to be downloaded at www.miamiarchdiocese.org/ReligiousEducation

Contact Information

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