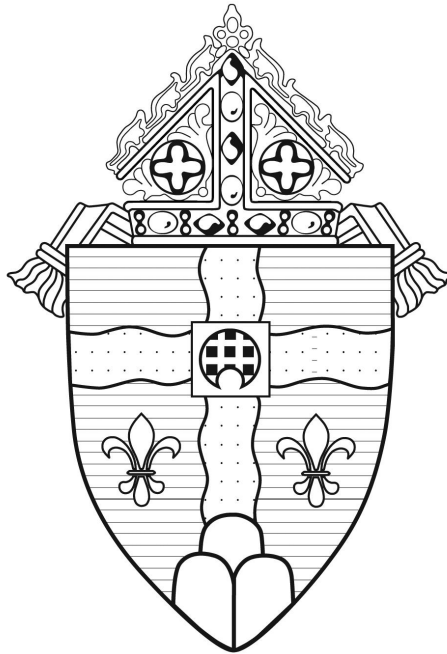


**A RESOURCE FOR HIRING
NEW
PARISH CATECHETICAL LEADERS**

**Director/Coordinator of:
Religious Education
Junior High Ministry
Youth Ministry
Young Adult Ministry
Adult Formation**



DIOCESE OF JOLIET
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE
101 W. Airport Rd.
Romeoville, IL 60446
PHONE: (815) 838-6475 FAX: (815) 588-6003
www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo

INTRODUCTION

This resource is designed to provide assistance and guidance in the hiring of a new parish catechetical leader. The following procedures are to be used as an aid to pastors and search committees, as they seek to hire competent and qualified personnel for their parish. These procedures will help to insure that the proper steps are used in the process of hiring professional catechetical leaders. If you have any questions, please contact the Associate Director for Leadership and Formation at the Religious Education Office.

CATECHETICAL LEADERS

Catechetical programs, large and small, urban, suburban and rural, depend on human leadership. Without lessening the fact that faith sharing is a gift of God, the planning, overseeing and evaluating of parish catechetical programs demand the resources and talents of qualified leaders.

“Leadership is a primary component of effective catechetical ministry in a parish. Catechetical leaders, whether they are in religious education, school, youth ministry, adult formation, or initiation and sacramental ministry, are charged with a profound and sacred responsibility of fostering an environment in which people may grow in their understanding, appreciation, integration and practice of Catholic faith.

Leadership in catechetical ministry has been affirmed by the Church as an authentic vocational call. As with any discernment of vocation, it is appropriate that a candidate for catechetical leadership engage in prayer, study and dialogue with spiritual advisors and with appropriate agents of the Church”. (*Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet, Section I, B. Vocation of Catechetical Leadership p. 1*)

LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

The description of leadership qualifications as defined in the guidelines and policies of *Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet* follows:

1. Director

The title Director is reserved for persons who possess:

- 1) A minimum of a master’s degree in a theological, catechetical or related area of study;
- 2) A bachelor’s degree in a related area of study **and** completion of at least the equivalent of 30 hours in advanced catechetical formation recognized by the Religious Education Office.

Those without a master’s degree are encouraged to develop a plan, in consultation with the parish and the REO, for attainment of a master’s degree in an appropriate area of study.

Directors should have appropriate communications and interpersonal skills, be grounded in Church teachings, and understand catechesis and faith development. Their responsibilities include developing and maintaining programs, evaluating curriculum, overseeing catechist formation, and planning events that provide catechetical services to all persons.

2. Coordinator

The title Coordinator is used for persons who possess either:

- 1) A bachelor’s degree in a theological, catechetical or related area of study; **or**
- 2) The equivalent of 30 hours of advanced catechetical formation recognized by the Religious Education Office.

Possession of a bachelor’s degree in a theological, catechetical or related area is a minimal academic expectation for catechetical leaders. Those not in possession of such degree are to develop and begin a plan, in concert with the parish and the REO, for attainment of such a bachelor’s degree within two years of hiring date.

PROCEDURES FOR HIRING A NEW CATECHETICAL LEADER

STEP 1: PARISH NOTIFIES DIOCESAN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR LEADERSHIP OF VACANCY

- Pastor completes the Parish Vacancy Notification Form (enclosed) indicating that a catechetical leader will be needed for the parish in the upcoming year. The REO will confirm the request with the pastor and create a file for this parish catechetical ministry position.

STEP 2: A SEARCH COMMITTEE IS FORMED

- Pastor gathers the search committee to assist him. The ideal committee would consist of six to eight people from the following:
 - ✓ The pastor
 - ✓ A representative from the education commission of the parish council
 - ✓ A representative of the respective catechetical ministry advisory board.
 - ✓ A catechist/volunteer of the respective catechetical ministry area.
 - ✓ A parent (if program serves children under the age of 18) of a participant in the respective catechetical ministry area.

STEP 3: SCHEDULE AN ON-SITE PARISH CONSULTATION WITH THE REO DIRECTOR

- Contact the Director of Religious Education either by phone (815-838-6475) or by email tquinlan@dioceseofjoliet.org

STEP 4: PARISH PROFILE & JOB DESCRIPTION ARE COMPLETED AND FORWARDED TO THE REO

- The search committee together completes the Parish Catechetical Ministry Needs Profile (enclosed). The previous catechetical leader job description is reviewed. If no job description is on file, the committee creates one. Refer to the Job Description Development Guidelines and Form enclosed.
- These documents will be placed in the parish file.
- Forward a copy of the Parish Profile and the Job Description to the:
Associate Director for Leadership and Formation
101 W. Airport Dr.
Romeoville, IL 60446

STEP 5: MINISTRY POSITION WILL BE POSTED ON THE DIOCESAN WEB SITE

- Individuals interested in ministry positions contact the REO for an Applicant Packet. This packet includes: **Application Form** (catechetical leaders already in the field within the Joliet Diocese will use the Intra-Diocesan Application Form). Applicants will need to provide **transcripts from the accredited university or college** they have attended.

STEP 6: APPLICANTS ARE CONTACTED & INTERVIEW DATES SET

- When the application packet is complete and the REO has conducted the initial interview with the applicant, a copy of the materials will be forwarded to the parish.
- The committee reviews the applicants credentials and decides who will be scheduled for an interview. If possible, interview at least (3) applicants.
- Conduct interviews, using the suggested questions enclosed. Be sure to make notes after each interview. Interview notes form is enclosed and can be duplicated.

STEP 7: APPLICANTS ARE SELECTED FOR A SECOND INTERVIEW

- Once the committee has finished all initial interviews, **references of those who will be called back for a second interview are contacted.** When this is completed, the second interview is scheduled and conducted. Even if there is only one applicant, check references and conduct second interview. At the second interview have the applicant complete the **Diocese of Joliet Employment Inquiry Release Form** (enclosed).

STEP 8: DESIRED APPLICANT IS SELECTED AND CONTACTED

- **Complete background check for the applicant that you have selected before contacting the applicant with an offer.**
- **Please contact the REO for the necessary materials.** Offer a contract to the desired applicant. Once the applicant accepts the offer, prepare the contract. If that person does not accept the offer, contact the next applicant, using the same procedure.

STEP 9: DIOCESAN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR LEADERSHIP IS CONTACTED

- After the contract and job description are signed, forward a copy to the REO. A phone call to the Associate Director for Leadership as soon as possible will help to insure that the applicant's name be removed from the candidate list and the parish's vacancy will also be corrected. All newly placed catechetical leaders will be invited to an orientation meeting at the REO. The Associate Director for Leadership maintains contact with the new catechetical leader and visits him/her at the parish during the first year of ministry in the Diocese of Joliet.

PARISH VACANCY NOTIFICATION FORM

Parishes seeking new personnel are requested to complete this form and return it as soon as possible to:

**Associate Director for Leadership
Religious Education Office
101 W. Airport Dr.
Romeoville, IL 60446**

PARISH: _____

CITY: _____ PHONE: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

1. In the upcoming year our parish anticipates the need to seek new personnel in the following areas:

- _____ Religious Education
- _____ Junior High Ministry
- _____ High School Ministry
- _____ Young Adult Ministry
- _____ Adult Formation

2. The most important skills needed to fill this position are:

3. This position will be: _____ Full Time
_____ Part Time (with benefits)
_____ Part Time (without benefits)

4. This position needs to be filled by: _____.

For Office Use:

Date Received:

File Created:

PARISH PROFILE

FOR USE IN ASSESSING PARISH CATECHETICAL MINISTRY NEEDS

PART I.

NAME OF PARISH: _____

ADDRESS:

Number	city	zip
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1. Size of parish: _____ families

2. Average age of parishioners: _____ years old

3. Ethnic make-up of parish: _____

4. Description of established or growing civic community:

5. # of youth in the elementary religious education program (preschool – 6th grade): _____

6. # of catechists in the elementary religious education program (preschool – 6th grade): _____

7. # of youth in the junior high ministry program (7th –8th grade): _____

8. # of catechists in the junior high ministry program (7th –8th grade): _____

9. # of youth in the high school ministry program (9th-12th grade): _____

10. # of volunteers in the high school ministry program (9th-12th grade): _____

11. Description of the Young Adult Ministry program

12. Description of the Adult Formation program

13. Description of areas of concern within the parish: (financial and/or space restrictions, technology concerns, special education needs, etc)

14. Does the parish have a day school? _____
If yes, what responsibility would the catechetical leader have to the day school?

15. Description of three strong dimensions of the parish's catechetical ministry program:

16. Description of three areas of the catechetical ministry program needing attention & development:

17. Description of the primary challenge a catechetical leader will face in the parish:

PART II.

Please indicate all the programs that are operating in the parish with an “O”; and then indicate with an “X” those programs for which the new catechetical leader would be responsible.

EARLY CHILDHOOD:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| _____ Sunday Nursery | _____ Preschool Program |
| _____ Young Parent Support Group | _____ Catechist Formation |
| _____ Other _____ | |

ELEMENTARY:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| _____ Weekly class sessions | _____ Rainbows Program |
| _____ Liturgy & Penance Services | _____ Children’s Catechumenate |
| _____ Field Trips for _____ | _____ Special Education Program |
| _____ Service Projects | _____ Catechist Formation |
| _____ Other _____ | |
| _____ Sacramental Preparation for Eucharist | |
| _____ Sacramental Preparation for Reconciliation | |

JUNIOR HIGH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| _____ Weekly Class sessions | _____ Service Projects |
| _____ Liturgy & Penance Services | _____ Social Activities |
| _____ Retreats for grades _____ | _____ Summer Activities |
| _____ Field Trips | _____ Sacramental Preparation for Confirmation |
| _____ Family Nights | _____ Catechist Formation |
| _____ Other _____ | |

JOB DESCRIPTION DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

This information can be used by the pastor or hiring committee/board in developing a job description for a catechetical leader. Involving the person or people who may ultimately hold a position in the development of a job description for a particular position, may help maximize that person's effectiveness in the position.

The focus of a job description should be on the desired results. Thus, the focus of a record keeping responsibility can be addressed in a statement such as, "Maintain adequate records for those enrolled in the program," rather than focusing on the activity itself, "Make records for those enrolled in the program."

It can be helpful to list the responsibilities of the position in order of their importance, or in the order in which they will command time of the professional. Here are some questions to consider:

- What are the key responsibilities of the position?
- What are the goals/targets expected for the tasks of these responsibilities?
- What individuals/resources/space will be required to accomplish these tasks?
- Will the position require the professional to recruit individuals or acquire and maintain the resources and space needed for the tasks?
- Will the position require training of volunteers? How many? Is there a minimum standard for time, content, etc.?

A position may require collaboration with other parish professionals, or the supervision of other staff members. Here are some questions to consider:

- What are the general areas of collaboration that can be foreseen at the time of writing the job description?
- Who is responsible for initiating the collaborative efforts? Who will be responsible for the results of the collaboration?
- How many staff members are to be supervised? What interaction will be required of the supervisor?

Each parish catechetical leader is inevitably responsible to the pastor. Here are some questions to consider:

- How often will the professional be required to update the pastor?
- Is there specific information the professional will be required to provide the pastor with on a regular basis?
- In what areas might the professional be asked to serve as a resource to the pastor?

A catechetical leader, regardless of their personal educational and professional background, needs continual updating in the theory and practice of church ministry and networking with other professionals in other parishes and in the Diocese, in order to serve in the most effective manner. Here are some questions to consider:

- Are there groups of professionals in the Diocese within which the professional may find professional support?
- Are there professional associations to which the professional should have membership at the expense of the parish?

A professional will work within Diocesan and Parish structures of leadership.

- Are there parish committees that require the membership of the professional?
- Are there parish meetings that the professional should attend? If so, in what capacity should that person attend? How often would they be required to attend?

A job description should be realistic. It should not be developed as an ideal in mind to which a professional can work towards, but rather something possible within the time contracted by parish and professional.

Job descriptions need to be reviewed annually and if necessary revised, during the time of the Contract Renewal Process.

JOB DESCRIPTION: YEAR

TITLE _____ PARISH _____

Signature of Catechetical Leader **Date**

Signature of Pastor **Date**

Supervisor:

Professional Staff Member General Responsibilities:

Ministry Area Responsibilities:

Other Responsibilities as assigned:

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please note, you cannot ask any questions about age and/or marital status

1. What is your vision of parish catechesis? In particular children, junior high, high school, young adult or adult?
2. What kind of experiences have you had in directing or working in a catechetical program? In particular children, junior high, high school, young adult or adult?
3. What challenges have you encountered in directing or working in a catechetical program? In particular children, junior high, high school, young adult or adult?
4. What rewards have you encountered in directing or working in a catechetical program? In particular children, junior high, high school, young adult or adult?
5. What was the size of the program(s) you have been involved in?
6. How have you recruited volunteers to help in the program? How have volunteers been supported by you?
7. How have or how will you network with other resources in the parish to enrich the program? Neighboring parishes? Diocese?
8. How have you demonstrated an understanding of the goals and purpose of catechetical ministry?
9. What are some professional goals you have set for yourself?
10. What are some of the educational goals you have set for yourself?
11. Any other questions the committee feels necessary based on the Parish Profile and Job Description.

INTERVIEW NOTES

(For duplication as needed)

Name of Applicant: _____

Position applying for: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Signature of Interviewer: _____

RATING SCALE: 1 = BELOW EXPECTATION

2 = AT EXPECTATION

3 = ABOVE EXPECTATION

4 = BEYOND EXPECTATION

Using the above scale, please indicate your impressions of the applicant. You may also want to write down comments you feel are necessary. This sheet will help you in your discussion about the above named applicant following the interview.

ITEM	RATING	COMMENTS
Resume Impressions		
Philosophy		
Professional Qualifications		
Applicant Concerns		
Personal Qualities		
Personal Appearance		
Over All Impressions		

