

# **The Catechist: A Sharer of the Gift of Faith Ministry Description**



## **The Role of a Catechist**

The role of a catechist is one who is called to nurture a living, conscious and active faith in the youth he/she teaches. A Catechist is one who witnesses to the faith by sharing his/her faith commitment through word, experience, prayer and liturgy.

The Catechist is responsible for planning and leading catechetical sessions. The time commitment is for one school year. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes each week.

The commitment involves on-going personal faith formation. It is vital that as a sharer of the faith that the catechist continues to grow in his/her own faith. That is why catechist formation is highly encouraged because it provides a teaching context in which the catechist can develop a deep understanding and love for the Catholic faith which he/she shares.

## **Qualifications**

1. To have a desire to share your faith with children and young people
2. To be able to relate comfortably with children and young people
3. To be committed to quality Catholic education
4. To take part in the sacramental life of the Church
5. To be a Confirmed Catholic
6. To be a Safe Environment, VIRTUS, trained adult volunteer
7. To begin/continue working towards Catechist formation

## **Specific Responsibilities**

- I. To be committed to sharing your faith, by using the lessons provided for class periods beginning mid-September and continuing through the first week in May. The sessions are one hour and fifteen minutes.
  - a. If you are unable to teach your class, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. A good place to begin is with the parents of your students. In the beginning of the academic year, make contact with parents and keep a list of those who are willing to teach the class if necessary and are confirmed Catholics who have also attended the Safe Environment (or VIRTUS) training. Please notify the coordinator of any substitutes in class, including their name and date of your absence. If you are unable to secure a substitute on your own, notify the coordinator as soon as possible so that a substitute catechist may be found.

- b. Attend required meetings and in-services as needed to stay informed of policies and to stay connected with the program.
2. To share your Catholic faith with a group of about 10 to 12 students in a particular grade level using the information provided to you by the St. Laurence Religious Education Office.
  - a. Share your faith by presenting the weekly lessons using the resources provided and *covering the specific chapter content* noted on the Lesson Schedule provided. If you wish to deviate from the material scheduled or supplement the lesson with other content or activities, please check with the coordinator for approval of the material you wish to use prior to its introduction in class.
  - b. Review your upcoming lessons at least a week in advance so that you can adequately prepare for class. If there are any arts and crafts supplies or any other materials that are needed for your lesson, you can contact the Religious Education office in advance for ordering. Additionally, you can request from the Religious Education office copies of any relevant activity worksheets and handouts at this time.
  - c. Arrive ***no later than 15 minutes*** before class begins. Always pick up your class bin and check the white board in the workroom for any last minute instructions. Please remember that the coordinator and administrative assistant may not always be available to facilitate last minute requests immediately before class time, so please allow yourself sufficient preparation time.
  - d. Be in the Large Gathering Room before the commencement of Opening Prayer to greet Elementary students as they assemble for class or be in your classroom to greet the Preschool children.
  - e. Strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity. Communicate this expectation to your students on the first day of class in an age appropriate way. If you have a student whose behavior is disruptive to the class, first remind him/her of the expectations of classroom behavior. If behavior continues, send the student to the RE Office. **DO NOT KEEP A DISRUPTIVE STUDENT IN THE CLASSROOM.**
  - f. Before class ends, have students help pick up trash and return furniture to its original position if necessary.
  - g. Dismiss students to parents or authorized adults only. Parents (or another designated adult) *must sign out* each child before they can be dismissed from the classroom. Children are not allowed to wait downstairs or to go outside to meet their parents without an accompanying catechist or assistant. If a child is not picked up within a reasonable time after class dismissal, please bring the student to Joan, Monica or Molly at the front reception desk of Building B and we will remain with that child until he/she has been picked up by an authorized adult.