

Criteria of the Office of Religious Education

for the use of

Into the Fields

as a parish-based resource used to fulfill the requirements of the
California Catholic Conference of Bishops for

Basic Catechist Certification

The Office of Religious Education is charged with the responsibility for Catechist Formation and the processes used to fulfill the requirements established by the California Catholic Conference of Bishops for catechist certification. To ensure the quality of catechist formation, the Office of Religious Education requires skilled, competent and knowledgeable facilitators to facilitate the *Into the Fields* catechist formation program.

The Office of Religious Education recognizes *Into the Fields* as providing the catechetical content and processes provided within the Archdiocese in the Theology and Specialization phases of Catechist Formation.

The Office of Religious Education affirms the importance of a *team approach* to catechist formation. Traditionally, catechist formation has been facilitated by teams of Master Catechists. Facilitators for *Into the Fields* will never lead a formation process alone, but will always work as part of a team. When considering candidates for the integral role of facilitator, the following considerations will serve responsible discernment.

Requirements for ITF Facilitators:

- ❖ Competent facilitators are to have at least 3-5 years experience in Catechetical Ministry, preferably as a catechetical leader (e.g. Master Catechist, DRE, School Principal, RCIA Leader, Teacher, Adult Educator, Youth Minister).
- ❖ Facilitators will themselves be certified catechists, and at least one member of a team of facilitators will have achieved advanced catechetical formation, or its equivalent.
- ❖ Facilitators are to have the knowledge, skills and ability to facilitate discussion among adults, and be able to lead the adult learners to engage in an in-depth conversation about faith and their own particular life issues.
- ❖ Facilitators are people who can create a welcoming, hospitable climate for learning and provide the structures for a good process of faith sharing.
- ❖ Facilitators are skilled in the dynamics of small group conversation.
- ❖ Facilitators are skilled and adept listeners.
- ❖ Facilitators are people who possess a holistic, integrated vision of catechetical ministry and can lead others to understand the dignity of their vocation as catechists.
- ❖ Facilitators are people who can hold the tension of, and be respectful toward different points of view and diversity of cultures
- ❖ Facilitators are people who are open to growing in their own faith understanding and are participating in opportunities for ongoing formation.

Relationship between the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education and the Parish Center:

- ❖ A parish catechetical leader wishing to use *Into the Fields* for catechist certification will contact the Consultant for Catechist Formation at the Office of Religious Education and request approval and recognition as a center for catechist certification.
- ❖ The parish catechetical leader, along with a group of approved facilitators, will develop an outline of their proposed process and calendar. This outline is to be submitted to the Consultant for Catechist Formation at the Office of Religious Education.
- ❖ The Consultant for Formation will submit the outline and proposals to an Archdiocesan Formation team for review, evaluation, and possible suggested adaptations.
- ❖ The Archdiocesan Formation Team will engage in a conversation with the parish catechetical leader and the facilitator team to ascertain and determine parish readiness for approval and recognition as a center for formation using *Into the Fields*.
- ❖ The Archdiocesan Formation team will supervise the ongoing progress of the approved parish center through occasional (at least two) onsite visits.
- ❖ The Facilitator Team will be charged with the responsibility to see to it that all learners participate fully in all learning sessions. Any missed sessions must be made up in a manner determined by the facilitator team.
- ❖ Upon completion of the *Into the Fields* process in the parish center, and upon completion of the practicum observations and evaluations, the Facilitator Team will submit a recommendation for certification (trad. “Blue cards”) to the Consultant for Catechist Formation at the Office of Religious Education for each candidate.

Catechist Formation – Practicum, Evaluation and Observations.

- ❖ Catechist Formation requires a learner / candidate for certification to engage in
 - 2 observations of a certified catechist (candidate observes)
 - 2 evaluations of the candidate by certified catechists

Evaluation and Observation forms are available online for download:

<http://www.archdiocese.la/ore>

Click on “Catechist Certification” on the right-side navigation bar.

Forms are stored online as PDF files and require Adobe Reader to view or print.

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