



DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG — Office of the Bishop

4800 Union Deposit Road — Box 2153 • Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-2153
(717) 657-4804

September 1, 2006

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am pleased to introduce to you the renewed curriculum for elementary religious education for the diocese. The curriculum will serve to meet the needs of both our parish religious education programs and Catholic schools.

The formation of young people in the faith is a special task given to the Church. It is essential that our parishes and schools be prepared to hand on the faith in its integrity and beauty. The new curriculum is an effort to provide teachers and catechists with a comprehensive outline of what should be communicated to the young people who are placed into their care. While parents have a central role in handing on the faith to their children, the Church must stand ready to fully support them with a substantive and appropriate unfolding of the mysteries entrusted to Her.

The teacher or catechist must also be prepared to assume their role through ongoing formation. Once we have met Christ, our Lord, we must ever deepen that relationship through personal prayer and study. Formal courses on catechetical topics, retreats, spiritual reading, and an active devotional life all are needed to support and sustain the work of one charged with the Christian formation of youth.

This new Elementary curriculum, along with the current High School curriculum, is normative for the Diocese of Harrisburg, and will be used in all parishes and schools in the diocese. Catechetical materials must be selected from approved sources, specifically from texts that have been found in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which Pope John Paul II called a "sure norm for the teaching of the faith".

May our Lord bless you in your commitment to caring for the "little ones" of the Kingdom.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Harrisburg