



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE

Post Office Box 3387

Lafayette, Louisiana 70502-3387

Telephone: 337-261-5614 Fax: 337-261-5603

January 12, 2010

Pastors, Principals, Catechetical Leaders
Diocese of Lafayette

Dear Pastors, Principals, Catechetical Leaders:

To ensure that our Catholic Faith is presented clearly, articulately and in its entirety when it comes to sound catechetical texts, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has established an ad hoc committee to oversee the use of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. As a part of this committee's work, catechetical texts and series which have been voluntarily submitted are reviewed to determine whether or not they conform to the basic teachings of the *Catechism* as outlined in the protocol instrument established by the committee. In order for a catechetical work to be in conformity with the *Catechism* it must present the doctrinal issues it treats completely and faithfully. While this review does not consider methodological issues, it is an important indicator of a work's suitability as a catechetical tool.

In our Diocese, a second level of review has been established in a committee of volunteer evaluators that looks not only at doctrinal conformity but also at methodological concerns. A third level of review to determine evaluation accuracy and average scores has been established in the Office of Christian Formation Advisory Council. In order to assist those responsible for choosing catechetical textbooks and materials for elementary and high school programs in the Diocese of Lafayette, the Office of Christian Formation is providing the results of this evaluation process, to be used in conjunction with the findings of the Bishops' Committee. The evaluations contained herein give current information on each text and series that are found to be in conformity with the *Catechism*. The evaluations also address methodological concerns for each text and series. **High school texts, found to be in conformity with the new curriculum framework, will be evaluated as publishers make them available.** It is recommended that pastors and parish and school catechetical leaders select materials that have scored the highest on the evaluation. Under no circumstances should anyone write their own textbooks.

As a result of the changes in the high school curriculum developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, our diocesan policy regarding textbook selection now states:

POLICY: The following requirements apply to high school texts as well as elementary, and to Catholic schools as well as parish religion programs.

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Page Two

All religion programs must use textbooks which carry Imprimatur and *Nihil Obstat* acknowledging that there is nothing contained in the text which is contrary to Catholic teaching. It is also required that only textbooks which have been judged to be in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by the Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops may be used.

For high school texts, a second judgment of conformity from the Ad Hoc Committee is required regarding the alignment of a textbook to the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*. This policy is expected to be implemented at each particular grade level in the year in which the majority of publishers make textbooks available.

The teaching of our Catholic faith to the young is a solemn duty for pastors and those who share this ministry. I express my appreciation to all who work so faithfully and unselfishly in this important task. Likewise, I thank the Office of Christian Formation and all who participated in the textbook evaluation. I believe this work will be helpful to all who are responsible for providing quality programs of religious education.

With prayers for your good health and for all of God's blessings, I am

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Michael Jarrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Michael Jarrell
Bishop of Lafayette

MJ:mhb

enclosure