

# **TEXTBOOK EVALUATIONS**

## **APPROVED TEXTS**

**Elementary Series**

**Junior High Series**

**Senior High Series**

**Confirmation Series**

## **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

**Catechist Materials (Required & Supplemental)**

**Elementary Materials**

**Junior High Materials**

**Senior High Materials**

**Confirmation Materials**

## **Approved Catechetical Textbooks for use in the Diocese of Duluth**

The following section contains catechetical textbooks approved by the Diocese of Duluth. Parishes and Catholic schools must choose from the following list when selecting base textbook series for religious education. These textbooks have first been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on the Catechism as being in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

The USCCB's Committee evaluates textbooks to ensure completeness in the delivery of the Deposit of Faith and the use of a language that is reflective of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, providing "a common language in service to the unity of the faith." Also, the USCCB's Committee on Catechesis has addressed a pattern of doctrinal deficiencies that have existed in catechetical textbooks. Many of these deficiencies have involved the core beliefs of the Catholic Faith, such as an insufficient attention to the Trinity, an obscured presentation of the centrality of Christ in salvation history and insufficient emphasis on the divinity of Christ, inadequate presentation of the sacraments, and deficiency in teaching on original sin and sin, in general. The use of textbooks approved by the USCCB's Committee on Catechesis helps a teacher/catechist to avoid such deficiencies in his/her own teaching.

Additionally, the textbooks have been reviewed by Diocese of Duluth's Committee on Catechesis to identify those that most closely follow the Curriculum Standards for Catechesis for the diocese. The textbooks have also been evaluated for such things as age appropriateness, teacher resources and tools, compatibility between parish and Catholic school texts, assessment tools, technology support, recognition of diverse learning styles (i.e. auditory, visual, kinesthetic), and family involvement.

### What does it mean to use an approved series?

Textbooks are meant to be tools to help the teacher/catechist deliver the lesson in an accurate and complete way. The Curriculum Standards for Catechesis are what should drive each lesson. The textbook provides great assistance to the teacher/catechist in lesson-planning by ensuring a faithful delivery of the Deposit of Faith in an age-appropriate way, providing reinforcement activities for the lesson, exposing the students to Scripture and Catechism references, assessing a student's comprehension of a lesson, and addressing various learning styles. Textbooks also provide means for helping an absent student make up a lesson that is missed.

Textbooks provide illustrations that assist the learner by emphasizing concepts in many forms such as graphs, photos, and maps. Textbooks also provide examples of good religious art, statuary, and icons; pictures of various churches and architecture; and the cultural diversity among Catholics.

There are two extremes that should be avoided in the use of textbooks. The first is a slavish use of the textbook, where it is solely relied upon to deliver the lesson. The other extreme is the non-use of a textbook, altogether, which runs the risk of the teacher/catechist not delivering the Deposit of Faith in an accurate or complete manner.

The best scenario for use of a textbook is for both the teacher and students to have copies of the textbooks. This is especially true in the lower grades, where many of the activities are presented on the textbook pages for the student to complete. Textbooks also allow the students to visually comprehend the terminology of our Catholic Faith. If a parish or school wishes to cut down on the expense of purchasing new textbooks each year, a notebook could be used in conjunction with the textbook. This would not be feasible for the very young grades, but could be used with older children if the teacher/catechist directs the students to write answers in the notebook instead of directly in the textbook.

In developing Curriculum Standards, the Diocese of Duluth recognizes that different formats exist for catechesis, especially in the high school grades (large group, small group, classroom style, etc.) It may be possible for experienced teachers/catechists to develop lessons that do not require each student to have a copy of a textbook. However, at a minimum, the teacher/catechist is to use a copy of the teacher manual and/or student text of one of the approved textbook series in his/her lesson planning.