

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

PERSONNEL

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CATECHISTS

1. Ecclesial & Theological

- a) Catechists work collaboratively with the pastor, catechetical leaders, parents and other associates in ministry.
- b) Catechists faithfully represent and practice the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- c) Catechists are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- d) Catechists respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their own personal form of spirituality normative.

2. Inclusion

- a) Catechists recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- b) Catechists serve all people without regard to gender, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political beliefs.
- c) Catechists act to ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.

3. Accountability

- a) Catechists are accountable to the pastor, catechetical leader, or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the diocesan bishop.
- b) Catechists are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministry "...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently" (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- c) Catechists exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding fiscal matters placed in their trust.

4. Confidentiality

- a) Catechists respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.

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- b) Catechists are aware of their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- c) Catechists are aware of the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect.
- d) Catechists adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.

5. Conduct

- a) Catechists support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of children and adolescents.
- b) Catechists are aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- c) Physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between catechists and a child or adolescent are unethical and are prohibited.
- d) Catechists model healthy and positive behaviors with children, adolescents and other adults.
- e) Procuring, providing, or using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with children or adolescents is unethical and is prohibited.

6. Parish

- a) Catechists are aware of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policy with special attention to sexual misconduct, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of conduct and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any parish activity, and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasiums, or even at programs sponsored by the parish at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics.
2. It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No participant, volunteer adult leader, or parish staff member - male or female - should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
3. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - > Offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
 - > Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
 - > Explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his or her appearance;
 - > The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
 - > Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
 - > Graffiti of a sexual nature;
 - > Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
 - > Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

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Sex harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature - it also includes harassment that is based on gender. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman by or as a female body part, or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which are based upon race, color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and volunteers must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personnel or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, development, program evaluation, participation in parish programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or achievement.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a catechetical leader hugging a child after an accomplishment, a catechist consoling an adolescent with an injury, or physical conduct during an activity to enhance catechetical learning like engaging in movement to accompany liturgical music would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

4. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a parish employee, volunteer, participant, or visitor to the parish activity.

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5. Any person who believes that he/she is subject to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact either the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor, or (c) diocesan director of religious education. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a program administrator or a pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the diocesan director of religious education. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.
6. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any program administrator, volunteer, or staff engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.
7. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

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**HARASSMENT
POLICY VERIFICATION
FORM**

I, _____,
please print your name

- (check one) an employee of
- a volunteer at
- a parent/guardian of a youth participant
- a youth participant (grades 6-12)

have received copies of the diocesan policy on harassment.

I understand that it is necessary that any complaint of harassment must be filed with the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor or (c) diocesan director of religious education. I have had an opportunity to read the policy and am confident I understand the content and purpose.

St. Paul the Apostle - Religious Education
name of parish and program

your signature

Date: _____

**Department of Religious Education
Catholic Diocese of Columbus**

