



October 4, 2010

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The documents of the Church frequently speak of the central role of parents in the catechesis and faith formation of their children. Canon Law exhorts, "Parents and those who take their place are bound by the obligation and possess the right of educating their offspring. Catholic parents also have the duty and right of choosing those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of their children, according to local circumstances." (Can. 793 §1)

Today, parents are increasingly taking an active role in the education of their children, sometimes by organizing the formal education of their children in the home, including faith formation. The Church, and in fact, the Diocese of Greensburg clearly recognize the rights of parents as the primary educators of their children.

But, central to the Bishop's ministry is the proclamation and transmission of the Gospel. It is the Bishop who holds the primary responsibility for catechesis in his diocese. The Bishop accepts the role of chief catechist in his diocese and he and his delegates are responsible for the nature of the catechetical mission of the diocese.

It is with these responsibilities in mind that I am pleased to promulgate a policy for Religious Formation in the Home for the Diocese of Greensburg. The policy will take effect in all parishes in the diocese on Saturday, January 1, 2011. The policy addresses suitable texts, resources, and curriculum for religious formation in the home; the involvement in the parish of families formally teaching the faith in the home; sacramental preparation policies; methods in which parish personnel can assess the progress children are making in the formation in the faith; the training and catechetical certification of parents who choose religious formation in the home; and notifications, decisions, and appeals.

I wish to thank the staff of the Office for Evangelization and Faith Formation, its special committee of home schooling families, and the Faith Formation Leadership Committee for their work in developing the Religious Formation in the Home Policy. May God continue to bless our catechetical efforts as we transmit the faith in present culture.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Lawrence E. Brandt, JCD, PhD
Bishop of Greensburg