

Archdiocese of Grouard/McLennan

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES

The Initiation of Children



**Approved by
The Most Reverend Gerry Pettipas, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Grouard/McLennan**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
ARCHBISHOP PETTIPAS’S LETTER INTRODUCING THE GUIDELINES	2
SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES – Initiation OF CHILDREN POLICY 2.2.0	4
PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM POLICY 2.2.1	6
ARCHBISHOP PETTIPAS’S LETTER INTRODUCING CHANGES	8
CATECHETICAL NORMS FOR FIRST RECONCILIATION POLICY 2.3.1	9
CATECHETICAL NORMS FOR FIRST EUCHARIST POLICY 2.4.1	10
GUIDELINES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION POLICY 2.6.1	11
EASTERN RITE CONFIRMATION POLICY 2.6.2	13
FORM FOR BOOKING THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION	14
BEST PRACTICES FOR ADULTS INVOLVED IN SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION OF CHILDREN	15
DIOCESAN CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY 5.1 SUBSECTION S2	17
SCHOOL MASS GUIDELINES AND MASS PLANNING GUIDE POLICY 2.1.3	19



1 September 2014

Dear Colleagues in the Ministry of Sacramental Preparation,

A piece of well-worn conventional wisdom reminds us that it takes a whole village to raise a child. It takes a whole community, parish and diocese, to prepare our people, especially youngsters, to receive the sacraments that assure us of Jesus Christ's abiding presence and action in our lives. This is not the labour of a select few; it draws on the efforts, encouragement and prayer of many.

It is with that in mind that this collection of policies and guidelines was put together. These pages are taken directly from the Policy Manual of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. Our Office of Evangelization and Catechesis sought to put in one easy booklet the various practices in the diocese by which we prepare our young people to receive sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

As you use this valuable resource, I want you to be aware that you exercise a vital ministry in the life of the local Church. I know that you come to this in various roles: as pastor, parent, parish administrator, educator or catechist. We all play our part; we are members of a team. So our efforts must be done in unity with one another. While there will always be individual circumstances that we must attend to, my goal is to have a unity of approach across our diocese. We are members of one sheepfold, with one shepherd to guide us.

Please keep in mind that the policies found in this handbook call for the sacraments to be celebrated at specified times in the Archdiocese. The Baptism of a young person beyond about the age of seven is treated very differently in the Church from the baptism of infants. As we have established in this Archdiocese, First Reconciliation takes place in grade 2 (or about age 7), First Communion is in grade 3 (or about age 8), and Confirmation is in grade 6 (or about age 11). In particular

circumstances, a candidate may receive their sacraments at an age other than those prescribed, but this must always be the exception and not become the norm.

The staff in our Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has carefully researched relevant programs and practical resources to assist the child's family, parish and Catholic school community in preparing our youth to receive their sacraments. I call on all of you to familiarize yourself with these resources. Please, resist the temptation to devise your own program or to select another. You may find other resources with suitable additions to the program, but it should not replace what is recommended.

Again, I am grateful to you all for your collaboration in this vital ministry. May God bless our children through your care and good example.

Sincerely in Christ the Redeemer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and a cross at the beginning.

+ Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan

POLICY 2.2.0 Sacramental Guidelines – Initiation of Children

Sacramental preparation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is rooted in the following fundamental beliefs:

- a) All sacraments are ecclesial celebrations, i.e. celebrations of the Church.
- b) Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith.
- c) Catholic schools are an integral part of the on-going religious education of children, and provide valuable assistance in the foundational preparation for the sacraments.

The following general principles are to be kept in mind when all sacramental preparation programs are in place in the parishes and Catholic schools of the archdiocese:

1. **The pastor is ultimately responsible** for the proper preparation of our young people for the sacraments. The priest's direct involvement in catechesis is vital for the faith life of our young people. He shares in the triple mandate of the bishop, to sanctify, to teach and to govern.
2. In most if not all circumstances, **the pastor must have a team of trained catechists** to carry out the catechetical programs. These must work as teams. The composition of these teams will necessarily vary from one parish to another. The parish may establish one catechetical team for each sacrament, or the same team may deliver the program for more than one or all of these sacraments.
3. **Catechists must be credible.** They must take seriously the sacraments they are teaching and be role models for their students in their faithful practice.
4. In those communities where there are Catholic schools, **the teachers who are chosen to teach the sacraments** support what is provided by the parish catechetical team. The teachers may be invited to be part of the team.
5. Sacramental preparation needs to engage the whole parish community. Faith requires the community of believers to welcome, support and nurture the faith life of the parents and children involved. **The parish is responsible** (and not the Catholic school) **for the proper registration of candidates** for sacraments. The parish must ensure that valid proof of baptism is provided before the other sacraments are conferred on candidates.
6. In all sacraments, we deal with sacred mysteries. These are not empty rituals, or magical formulas that automatically produce a beneficial effect on the person of the one receiving them. For this reason, **there must be suitable catechesis** which prepares the candidate for the sacrament which they are about to receive. The persons receiving any sacrament must have an appreciation for what they are receiving, consistent with their intellectual and moral and emotional maturity.
7. The process or format for suitable catechesis for each sacrament needs to include the three pillars: the child's family, parish, and the Catholic school community if a child attends there. It should take into consideration the child's abilities and family circumstances. **Parent/family involvement in the preparation is vital for the child's faith development.** The catechetical programs that I endorse in these policies all have a component that encourages parent and family involvement.

8. **In the baptism rite, parents are reminded that they are the first educators of their children in the ways of faith, and that they are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith.** In every way possible, parishes must attempt to give the parents of the children the tools and the confidence they need in order to fulfill their role in their children's continual spiritual formation.
9. While there are recognized age/grade levels at which children are prepared and celebrate a given sacrament, the candidate's **parents and catechists must be sensitive to that candidate's "preparedness" to receive that sacrament.** Any departure from the norm, whether to delay or to advance the reception of the sacrament, shall be held in discussion with the pastor and the parties involved. The child must be ready and willing to receive a sacrament. Any child who expresses his/her own lack of readiness must be free to postpone the reception of a sacrament. A parent or catechist who has the sensitivity to perceive this in a child must also share this discernment with the pastor.
10. All norms laid down for creating a **safe and caring environment for children** are to be followed rigorously. These may be found in the Archdiocesan Policy Manual, section 5.1 and 5.2.

Given these principles which are proper to all the sacraments that a child will receive while in the elementary grades, all parents and priests and catechists should pay close attention to the policies relative to each of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on May 28, 2013

POLICY 2.2.1 Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism

Preparation for the sacrament of Baptism

As with all sacraments, there must be adequate preparation for the sacrament of Baptism. Canon 851, § 2 states that the parents of an infant who is to be baptized and likewise those who are to undertake the office of sponsor are to be properly instructed in the meaning of this Sacrament and the obligations which are attached to it.

Given the long-standing custom in many Native communities of the grandmother requesting to have grandchildren baptized, such a request is to be treated as if coming from the parents.

Place of Baptism

Note that Canon 860, § 1 states that “Outside the case of necessity, baptism is not to be conferred in private homes, unless the local Ordinary has permitted this for a grave cause.” As with other sacraments, the usual setting is the parish church; other settings should be contemplated only with the greatest caution. Baptism may appropriately take place at the Sunday Eucharist so that the entire community may be present, but the choice for such should be offered to the family, and this should not become the regular practice in parishes where there are many baptisms.

One Requirement for Infant Baptism

Canon 868, § 2 states that “there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic Church. If such a hope is altogether lacking, the Baptism is to be put off according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason.” A baptism consequently, may be deferred but never completely refused. In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, if a baptism is deferred, the priest or deacon must notify the Archbishop in writing, giving the reasons why.

In 1980, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued an Instruction on the baptism of infants. Regarding deferral of the Sacrament in cases of “non-practicing” Christian parents, it sets down the following mode of action:

- a) It is essential to bring the parents to a recognition of their responsibilities.
- b) It is also essential to evaluate the sufficiency of the guarantees concerning the Catholic upbringing of the children. These guarantees are given by some member of the family or by the godparents or by the support of the Christian community. (By guarantees, we mean that there is a well-founded hope of a Catholic upbringing)
- c) If conditions are sufficient in the judgement of the pastor, he can proceed with the baptism, because the children are baptized in the faith of the Church.

Preparation of Non-Baptized Children of Catechetical Age

According to Church law, canon 852, § 1, children who have attained the use of reason and are of catechetical age, seven years or older, who desire to celebrate Baptism are prepared through their participation in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), adapted for children. In keeping with this rite, they are to be prepared to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

A suitable preparation program in the parish would ideally involve the children's parents and members of the child's Catholic school (where one is present) and parish community.

Preparation of Non-Baptized Adults

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the norm for the preparation of non-baptized adults, as well as the norm for the preparation for a baptized adult for the Profession of Faith, is the R.C.I.A. (The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). (Cf. Canon 851)

Baptism and Rite

Given the significant number of Eastern Rite Catholics in our Province, attention must be paid to Canon 111:- "A child of parents who belong to the Latin Church is ascribed to it by reception of baptism, or if one or other parent does not belong to the Latin Church, and both parents agree in choosing that the child be baptized in the Latin Church, the child is ascribed to it by reception of baptism. But if the agreement is lacking, the child is ascribed to the Ritual Church to which the father belongs."

In such cases, a note should be made in the parish baptismal register.

All other considerations concerning baptism can be found in Chapter 1 of the Canonical and Pastoral Guide for Parishes.

Amended by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

Amended by the College of Consultors on 14 January 2015

Sent: Saturday, June 01, 2013 10:05 AM

Subject: Sacramental Preparation for Children

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

At the recent meeting of the Council of Priests and College of Consultors, we passed the following policy and guidelines for the preparation of our children for sacraments in general, and for the sacrament of first reconciliation in particular. As you will see, what we envision is the preparation for and celebration of First Reconciliation in grade two, and the preparation for a celebration of First Holy Communion in grade three.

Please bear in mind that it is the law of the Church that children celebrate first Reconciliation before first Communion.

By preparing for these sacraments and celebrating them in different years, I feel that we place a due and needed emphasis on each Sacrament, and that we highlight appropriately the celebration of Reconciliation, which we know has been given too little emphasis in recent decades. It is my hope that between their first Reconciliation and their First Holy Communion, that children will have received the sacrament of Reconciliation at least a couple of more times, most especially just prior to their First Communion.

I enjoin all pastors and catechists to do their utmost to dispel any fears about the Sacrament of Reconciliation for children. While honouring all guidelines relative to safe and secure environments, the “confessional box” is to be avoided in celebrating this sacrament with small children.

This policy is in effect. Please notify me if there are any difficulties in implementing it immediately.

+ Gerard

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POLICY 2.3.1 Catechetical Norms for First Reconciliation

- According to Church law and practice, (Canon 914) the sacrament of Reconciliation must be received before the child receives the Eucharist for the first time. This is normally to be prepared for and celebrated in grade two, or at about age seven.
- The child is to be assured that this sacrament is not fearsome. The concepts of sin and harm to others are easily understood by children, who have an innate sense of justice and harmony.
- It is understood that First Reconciliation is celebrated in the church in an atmosphere that is peaceful and welcoming for children. The celebration of the sacrament should include a communal celebration with individual confession and absolution. This is also an ideal occasion to provide opportunity for parents and family members to celebrate the sacrament at the same time.
- Children in our Catholic schools are to be offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, preferably during the season of Lent. This may happen either at the school or in the parish church.
- Children are to be reminded that as they receive other sacraments in the Church (First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.); the celebration of Reconciliation is integral to their moral and spiritual readiness to receive these.
- The program and text for the preparation for this sacrament in the archdiocese is We Prepare for Reconciliation, published by Novalis (June 30, 2009). Other suggested resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010

Amended by the College of Consultors 16 on February 2011

Amended by the College of Consultors on 11 May 2011

Amended by the College of Consultors on 28 May 2013

POLICY 2.4.1 Catechetical Norms for First Eucharist

- A child's first sharing fully in the Eucharist is normally to be prepared for and celebrated in grade three, or at about age eight.
- As with all adults in Canada, children are free to receive Communion on the tongue or in the hand. Both of these options are to be freely offered to the child.
- There is no restriction in law that prevents children from receiving Communion under both species. This also is the communicant's option. However, careful preparation will prevent children from making faces or otherwise reacting to what for them may be a strong or bitter taste of the bread and/or wine.
- The reception of First Eucharist normally takes place at a regularly scheduled Sunday Mass with the child's family.
- As parents are the primary educators of their child's faith, it is encouraged that the children sit with their families and receive the Eucharist as a family.
- Parents are encouraged to choose attire that the children can wear to the Sunday Eucharist.
- According to canon law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the sacrament of Reconciliation is to be received before the child receives the Eucharist for the first time.
- As they are making their proximate preparation for their First Holy Communion, children are to be offered the opportunity for and strongly encouraged to receive again the sacrament of Reconciliation. This contributes to their moral and spiritual readiness to receive the gift of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. However, they should not be "forced" to do so. The celebration of Reconciliation before First Communion need not be the day prior, but every effort should be made to provide Reconciliation within two months of First Communion.
- Families are asked to be prudent and thoughtful in the ways that they mark the celebration of First Holy Communion for their child. Gifts or other ways of marking the event should be consistent with the spiritual nature of this sacrament and its dignified simplicity.
- The program and text for the preparation for this sacrament in the archdiocese is We Share in the Eucharist, published by Novalis. Additional supplementary resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Accepted and promulgated by the College of Consultors on 29 January 2014

POLICY 2.6.1 Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

The preparation and celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation follow the same guiding principles established in the Archdiocese.

Sacramental preparation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is rooted in the following fundamental beliefs:

- a) All sacraments are ecclesial celebrations, i.e. celebrations of the Church.
- b) Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith. Parent/family involvement in the preparation is vital for the child's faith development.
- c) Catholic schools where they exist are an integral part of the on-going religious education of children, and provide valuable assistance in the foundational preparation for the sacraments.

The sacrament of Confirmation is usually prepared for and celebrated in grade 6 or about age 11.

The Sacrament of Confirmation may take place at any time of the year. However, given the penitential nature of the season of Lent, the celebration of sacraments such as Confirmation is discouraged during that period. When the Archbishop's pastoral visitations transpire in a particular deanery, it is strongly recommended that Confirmation be celebrated during the time of visitation in the parishes of that deanery. All other parishes in the Archdiocese may request a date anytime outside of these dates. Please use the form *Request for the Sacrament of Confirmation to be Celebrated in Your Parish*, which can be found immediately following this policy.

The pastor is ultimately responsible for the proper preparation of the sacrament of Confirmation and his direct involvement in catechesis is vital. The catechetical team, consisting of the pastor and trained catechists from the parish and Catholic School, are all called to work together in a collaborative effort to support the growth of faith in our parents and young people.

There will always be some youth from outside our Catholic schools who will need to be included in catechesis and preparations for the celebration.

The program and text for the preparation of this sacrament in the Archdiocese is *Alive in the Spirit* published by Novalis. Other suggested resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

In planning the liturgy for the Sacrament of Confirmation, every effort is to be made to avoid the feel, the conduct, and the appearance of a "graduation". Confirmation candidates are to be dressed simply and modestly, to keep the focus on Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is not a graduation from a school or program, but the deepening of a relationship with Christ and the willingness to be his disciple.

As the candidates prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, the celebration of Reconciliation is integral to their moral and spiritual readiness.

Please keep in mind the following directives for the liturgical celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation:

- Depending on the capacity of the church, the preferred seating arrangement is a pew for each Confirmation candidate, sponsor and immediate family members.
- When the celebration of Confirmation takes place at a Sunday Mass, the prayers of the Sunday liturgy are to be used, as well as the readings prescribed for that Sunday. If the celebration happens on a weekday, there is greater flexibility for choosing the Mass texts and the readings.
- The liturgical ministers of the ceremony should be chosen as much as possible from among the confirmandi, but only with adequate planning and preparation.
- The rite of anointing takes place in a standing position for both the Archbishop and those receiving Confirmation.
- The music at a Mass of Confirmation is to be good liturgical music, which encourages the active participation of everyone. A suitable question to ask in the selection of music is, “Is this song or piece of music something we would use at any other Sunday Mass?”
- Power point can be used to support the celebration of the liturgy for music and the prayers of the Mass. It cannot be used for extra audio-visual presentations during the liturgy. A very appropriate time to show these is during the reception following the liturgy.
- Following the Mass and the recessional hymn, parents and others are welcome to take group and individual photos with the Archbishop. To keep the focus on the sacrament, only the designated photographer may take pictures during the ceremony and the Mass. This should be made clear before the Confirmation Day and again before the liturgy.

The flow of the Confirmation liturgy is the following:

- **Gospel** (*proclaimed by the pastor or deacon or other priest*)
- **Presentation of the Candidates** (*by the pastor or a catechist; using option A on page 93 of the ritual book Rite of Confirmation, ©CCCB 198*)
- **Homily**
- **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**
- **Laying on of Hands** (*the bishop’s hands are extended over the candidates, who are standing*)
- **Anointing with Chrism** (*while sponsors lay their hands on the confirmandi’s shoulders*)
- **General Intercessions**

Please contact the Archbishop in advance if you are planning any adaptations to the rite. If you are printing a program, please provide a draft copy before printing multiple copies.

Refer to the archdiocesan handbook, *Sacramental Guidelines: The Initiation of Children*, for further suggestions for preparing the celebration liturgy.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010
 Accepted by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011
 Amended by the College of Consultors on 14 January 2015

POLICY 2.6.2 Eastern Rite Confirmation

In the Ukrainian Catholic Church, confirmation is administered immediately after baptism. Problems arise when Ukrainian Catholic students fail to realize that they have already been confirmed. To obviate difficulties, the following guidelines are to be observed:

1. The certificate of baptism issued by the Ukrainian Catholic parish states explicitly that the person has been, not only baptized, but also confirmed. Thus, **baptism** certificates of potential candidates for confirmation in the Latin Rite are to be personally reviewed by the pastor (and principal in the event of the candidate being a student in a Catholic School) before the candidate is enrolled in the confirmation class. Only in rare cases where a baptismal record cannot be located is it permissible to accept an affidavit.
2. If a Ukrainian Catholic child had been baptized and not confirmed, the matter should be referred to the proper pastor of the child. If this is not possible because no Ukrainian Catholic priest resides or serves in that locality or region, the Ukrainian Catholic chancery should be notified before any steps are taken to enrol a Ukrainian Catholic child in the Latin Rite confirmation class.
3. In cases where a doubt exists as to the rite of a candidate for confirmation in the Latin Rite, the matter should be referred to either Chancery Office.
4. Efforts should be made to explain to children of whatever Rite what the laws and customs of their Rites are concerning confirmation. The proper pastor of each child is to be consulted by the teacher when any difficulty arises.

Reviewed by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

REQUEST FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION TO BE CELEBRATED IN YOUR PARISH

Parish Name and Place _____

Contact Person _____

Telephone _____

Fax Number _____

Email Address _____

Number of Candidates for Confirmation (approximate) _____

Suggested dates and times for the Celebration of Confirmation

Please select four possible dates and times, and list them in order of preference. Try to include two possibilities of dates during the week, and two possibilities of Saturday evening / Sunday.

First choice _____

Second choice _____

Third choice _____

Fourth choice _____

Return by fax to 780 532-9706 or by e-mail to exec.agm@live.ca as soon as you have date options and number of candidates.

Best Practices for Adults Involved in Sacramental Preparation of Children

Handing on the Good News of Jesus Christ to children and youth invites a life-giving response of faith, hope and love from all the adults involved in sacramental preparation. Foundational aspects for the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan include both initial and immediate preparation through best practices.

Best Practices for Families in the Initial Preparation

Faith is best passed on from adult to child through:

- † Participation in the Sunday Eucharist
- † Prayer in the family
- † Example and lived experience of parents and other prime caregivers to their belief in Jesus.
- † Daily living a Catholic way of life appropriate to one's age and spiritual development.
- † Religious instructional support from a Catholic School or home schooling program.



Best Practices for Priests in the Initial and Immediate Preparation

Sharing in the triple mandate of the bishop to sanctify, to teach and to govern, a priest:

- † Calls forth catechists by identifying gifts and skills for catechesis in parishioners.
- † Invites catechists to be part of catechetical teams and collaborate with him in sacramental preparation.
- † Makes sure that catechists and he actively participate in ongoing formation sessions.
- † Meets with parish catechetical and/or school teams in May or June of the preceding school year to plan dates for next year's celebrations of the sacraments.
- † Ensures proper registration of candidates for the sacramental preparation in his parish; provides sufficient time for parents to obtain a valid certificate of Baptism in the Catholic Church before the celebration of First Eucharist and Confirmation.
- † Is directly involved in providing suitable catechesis for parents and children; this includes meetings with parents only and with parents and children together.
- † Seeks out ways of coming to know the families of the children preparing to receive a sacrament. e.g. meeting with a family after Mass or a family inviting the priest to their home.
- † Fosters and welcomes participation in school and classroom faith formation activities throughout the school year, especially those focused on the sacraments.
- † Encourages and supports parents in the faith formation of their child.



Best Practices for Parent Involvement in the Immediate Preparation

Parents fulfill their rights and duties for their children's spiritual formation by:

- † Presenting their child to the faith community at the enrolment ceremony.
- † Learning more about the sacrament their child is receiving.
- † Becoming familiar with the preparation process by attending the parent informational meeting.
- † Taking an active part in the preparation sessions for parents and children.

- † Discussing and completing with their children the assigned pages in the program booklets.



Best Practices for Parish Involvement in the Immediate Preparation

Sacramental preparation needs to engage the whole parish community. The community of believer's best supports and nurtures the faith life of the parents and children by:

- † Inviting participation in sacramental preparation through announcements in parish and school newsletters, bulletins and websites.
- † Welcoming all those who respond when parents present their children to the faith community at the enrolment ceremony at the Sunday Eucharist.
- † Praying for the families as they journey toward the celebration of the sacrament.
- † Providing support to parents in their role as the first educators in the faith life of their children.
- † Inviting families involved in sacramental preparation to take part in the ministries at the Sunday Liturgy. E.g. Greeters, gift bearers, readers, take up the collection, give out bulletins and music ministry.
- † Helping with hospitality aspects at the retreat days, parent meetings and celebrations.



Personnel Management – *Policy Manual*, Section 5

II. PREVENTION

Part 1 – Training

All ministry personnel who work with children, adolescents or vulnerable adults will attend an orientation session on the abuse policies of the Archdiocese, covering both the **Code of Conduct (S-2)** and the **Definitions** found in the Misconduct Policy of the Archdiocese. This session will normally be conducted at least once a year by the Volunteer Screener of the Parish/Archdiocese. Adjacent parishes may co-sponsor a single orientation session.

Part 2 – Code of Conduct (S-2)

This Code of Conduct sets the terms of acceptable and unacceptable behavior in a wide range of circumstances. Familiarity with the Code is essential. Everyone to whom it applies must understand it and accept it if it is to be effective.

The two goals of the Code of Conduct are to prevent actual abuse and to avoid circumstances that lend themselves to the appearance of abuse.

All who work in “high risk” ministry positions must sign the Ministry Suitability Form and its Covenant of Care which commits them to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

Part 3 - Two Adult Rule and Other Precautions

- a. Two unrelated adults must be present during any church ministry activity involving children, adolescents or vulnerable adults, including the distribution of Communion in private homes where someone lives alone.
- b. Overnight trips and other events involving “high risk” groups must be planned to incorporate all applicable safeguards.
- c. Doors to classrooms and meeting rooms in which children, adolescents and vulnerable adults are gathered may remain closed only if two unrelated adults are present. If one of them must leave for any reason, the door must remain open.

The purpose of these precautions is likewise two-fold: to reduce the risk of actual abuse and to protect ministry personnel from false accusations.

S-2 Code of Conduct

For Clerics, employees and volunteers in “high risk” ministry situations

1. The preparation of children for the celebration of the Sacraments of first Reconciliation, first Communion and Confirmation is to be done in a group format with at least two unrelated adults present. One-on-one instruction is never permitted.
2. The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with children is to be done in an open space that allows the penitent and the priest to be in full view of others, or in the traditional confessional.
3. The location of Reconciliation Rooms is to be in high traffic area of the church building. Any new construction or renovation of reconciliation rooms is to provide for clear glass openings.
4. Two unrelated adults are to be present for all recreational and catechetical programs.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010

Amended by the College of Consultors on January 15, 2013

POLICY 2.1.3 School Mass Guidelines

School Masses are not always practical as a regular part of the religion program in our schools. However, at certain times they are most appropriate and are a delightful way to mark a particular Church season or the end of the school year. When it is decided that a Mass will take place, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. It is preferable that the Mass take place in the parish church. However, recognizing that this will not always be feasible, it is also permitted for the Mass to take place in a suitable place in the school itself.
2. When the Mass takes place in the church, proper church etiquette should be observed. Because such points are not always well known to students, especially if their family is not in the habit of attending church, it is recommended that the student body be reminded of the following points:
 - a. Respect for sacred space (the body of the church) is expressed first of all by silence. If it is necessary to speak to someone, this should be done in a whisper, so as not to disturb others in the church.
 - b. Running is not proper in the church.
 - c. Chewing gum should be disposed of before entering the church.
 - d. Hats are not worn in the church.
 - e. There should be no eating or drinking in the church, except of course for communion.
 - f. At the entrance to the church, there are holy water stoups. One is to use the holy water in making the sign of the cross on entering the church.
 - g. As one enters the pew, a genuflection is made towards the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.
 - h. Posture when in the pew should be respectful of the place. There is no need to lean back on the pew, or to lie down.
 - i. Cell phones are to be turned off prior to the commencement of the mass.

When the Mass takes place in a suitable room in the school (for instance, the gym), as much of the above should be observed as is appropriate and possible so as to highlight the fact that this is a sacred celebration.

3. All liturgical norms are to be respected. When there is doubt about a norm or practice, teachers or those planning the liturgy are advised to consult the priest who is presiding at the Mass.
4. Readings for the Mass must be from the Bible, and follow the pattern of the prescribed Liturgy of the Word, viz.

Option 1

Old Testament Reading
Responsorial Psalm
New Testament Reading
Gospel Acclamation
Gospel (proclaimed by a priest)

Option 2

Old Testament or New Testament Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Gospel Acclamation
Gospel (proclaimed by a priest)

5. Students engaged in any prominent role in the Mass are to be well prepared for their role. This includes choir, readers, and gift bearers. Servers should be selected from among those who are already trained as servers in the parish.
6. Music selections must be of a suitable liturgical nature. If you cannot find it in a Catholic hymn book, check with the presider before deciding on it. Recorded music (from a tape or CD) is discouraged.
7. Eucharistic ministers must be selected from those who have been properly trained and commissioned as Eucharistic Ministers by the parish. These may be chosen from among teachers or other adults present for the Mass.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 11 February 2010
Amended by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

SCHOOL MASS PLANNING GUIDE

School _____ Date _____
Theme _____ Feast _____
Place _____ Time _____
Presider _____ Planners _____
Music Ministers _____

Gathering Rite

*The tone of the celebration is set from the very beginning. The commentator should ensure that the microphone is turned on before beginning. The **Opening Rite** can be one of many possibilities. The **Glory to God** is used only on Feasts and Solemnities.*

Introduction of theme and welcome of guests before Mass

Written by _____ Read by _____
Entrance Song _____
Opening rite: [] Penitential Rite
[] Blessing with Holy Water
[] Other _____
Glory to God _____

Liturgy of the Word

*There may be one reading or two readings. The **First Reading** normally comes from the Old Testament of the Bible; the **Second Reading** normally comes from the New Testament (but not the Gospels). The **Alleluia verse** must always be sung, or else it may be omitted. The **Gospel** is read by a deacon or priest.*

First Reading _____ Reader _____
Responsorial Psalm _____ Cantor/Reader _____
Second Reading _____ Reader _____
Alleluia verse _____ Cantor _____
Gospel _____ Proclaimed by _____
General Intercessions prepared by _____
Read by _____

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Mass parts (Holy, holy, holy; Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen and Lamb of God) should all be sung. Careful thought should be given to Communion of the cup (wine), as many children are not accustomed to this and so tend to approach it awkwardly.

Gifts presented by _____
Special Instructions _____
Holy, holy, holy _____
Memorial Acclamation _____
Great Amen _____
Lord's Prayer [] recited [] sung
Lamb of God [] recited [] sung
Eucharistic Ministers Hosts 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
(Optional) Wine 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
Communion Songs _____

Dismissal Rite

Closing Song _____

