

## Diocese of La Crosse Religious Certification Program

Growing in the Catholic Faith through study and prayer is a life-long process. It is essential, above all, for any adult who teaches the Catholic Faith to receive ongoing formation in order to properly hand on the Faith to the next generation. Ongoing faith formation is necessary as “the quality of any form of pastoral activity is placed at risk if it does not rely on truly competent and trained personnel” (General Directory for Catechesis, n. 234). Therefore, the pastor, DRE, CRE, Youth Minister, RCIA Facilitator, Evangelization Coordinator, etc. are to attend to this most important task by advertising and organizing faith formation opportunities. The Certification Program consists of receiving Basic Certification, followed by Intermediate Certification, and then Advanced Certification. This is required for all those involved with handing on the Faith at any age-level in the Parish Faith Formation Program.

**For all certification levels:** Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced Renewal, the hours are to be earned from the following four categories:

- 1) Catholic Spirituality, 2) Scripture, 3) Doctrine, 4) Methods.

When the required amount of hours has been completed for each level, the Certification Folder should be submitted to the Office for Catechesis and Evangelization, and the applicable Certificate level will be issued and returned in the Certification Folder.

### How is *Basic* Certification earned?

- For a catechist, youth ministry or RCIA team member to complete Basic Certification six hours are to be earned each year over a five-year cycle, equaling 30 hours.
- For a Catechetical Leader (DRE, CRE, Youth Minister, RCIA Facilitator, or any other Parish Leader) to complete Basic Certification twelve hours are to be earned each year over a three-year cycle, equaling 36 hours.

### How is *Intermediate* Certification earned?

- For a catechist, youth ministry or RCIA team member to complete Intermediate Certification six hours are to be earned each year over a five-year cycle, equaling 30 hours.
- For a Catechetical Leader (DRE, CRE, Youth Minister, RCIA Facilitator, or any other Parish Leader) to complete Intermediate Certification twelve hours are to be earned each year over a three-year cycle, equaling 36 hours.

### How is *Advanced* Certification earned?

- For a catechist, youth ministry or RCIA team member to complete Advanced Certification, six hours are to be earned each year over a ten-year cycle, equaling 60 hours. The hours are to be earned in the same four categories.
- For a Catechetical Leader (DRE, CRE, Youth Minister, RCIA Facilitator, or any other Parish Leader) to complete Advanced Certification twelve hours are to be earned each year over a five-year cycle, equaling 60 hours.

After completing Advanced Certification, DREs, CREs, and Youth Ministers are to earn 12 hours per year. Catechists, youth ministry and RCIA team members are to continue earning 6 hours each year toward **Advanced Renewal**.



## How will I earn hours for Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced Renewal Certification?

Opportunities will be provided at the diocesan, deanery and the parish level. Note: Earning hours are best completed with a group.

- The **Diocese of La Crosse: Office for Catechesis and Evangelization, Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Sacred Worship** will provide hours every year toward certification.
- **Franciscan At Home** online learning system is the *preferred* means of earning certification hours. All workshops are geared toward proper formation in the context of handing on the Faith, with the spiritual life of the learner as the key focus. Workshops are worth **4** hours of certification credit. Each learner's responses are to be recorded on the person's Dashboard on *Franciscan at Home*. After completing a workshop, print the page that shows workshop completion & place in the Certification Folder.
- For those working toward a level of Certification, **the local Parish** will provide **4** hours of Faith Formation every year through *Franciscan at Home* or presented by qualified speakers, or with approved materials from the Office for Catechesis and Evangelization.

## Why does each person involved in handing on the Faith need a certification folder?

Those involved in the Parish Faith Formation Program are to record and keep evidence of hours earned with supporting paperwork for the current five-year period and kept on file by the DRE, CRE, or Youth Minister. It is the responsibility to update certification hours and provide documentation to the Office for Catechesis and Evangelization when sufficient hours have been accumulated for a Basic, Intermediate, Advanced or Advanced Renewal certificate. Folders are to be submitted in good order. Categorize according to **Diocesan inservices, parish inservices, and individual hours**. It is preferable to send the catechists/catechetical leader certification folders in groups so they are on the same certification cycle.

## How is information to be recorded on the blue certification folders?

When a learner completes hours for certification – for Basic, Intermediate or Advanced, or Advanced Renewal the person should ask the Parish Leader for the folder, update it, get the proper verification (initials) and return it to the place it is kept in the parish office.

**Front Cover:** Fill in your personal information.

- The Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced Renewal Certification completion date will be filled in by the Office for Cat. & Evangelization when you receive a specific Certificate.

**Other Panels:** There are separate panels for recording diocesan inservices, parish or deanery offerings, and individual studies. Entries should be completed & initialed by the leader.

## What goes in the folder?

*Franciscan at Home* workshop completion sheets. Study reflections/answers to discussion questions or completed booklets are also to be kept in the folder to document completion. There should be matching paperwork or documentation for each item listed on the folder.

## Who do I contact if I have questions?

Contact the Parish Leader regarding the process and offerings, Ann [alankford@diolc.org](mailto:alankford@diolc.org) about college credit or Beth [bjohnson@diolc.org](mailto:bjohnson@diolc.org) to check out resources, to review folders, and provide certificates for levels of completion.

