



**Diocese of Gary Catholic Schools
Faith Formation Policy
Effective August 1, 2009**

The teaching of religion is a distinctive mission of the Church. To be effective in their role, the administrators, teachers, and catechists in our catholic schools and parishes need to continually grow in faith, knowledge, and catechetical skills.

The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith. It is not simply an institution which offers academic instruction of high quality, but, even more importantly, it is an effective vehicle of total Christian formation.

All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry of the Church.

The National Directory for Catechesis (2005), as aligned with The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994), describes the six tasks of catechesis:

- † To promote knowledge of the faith;
- † To teach the liturgy;
- † To teach prayer;
- † To foster moral formation;
- † To educate for community life; and
- † To encourage missionary activities.

To be effective in their roles, catechists, administrators and teachers in Catholic schools need to continually grow in faith, knowledge, and catechetical skills.

The Diocese of Gary Office of Catholic Schools has established a policy for continuing education and formation in the Catholic faith; **all administrators and teachers** employed twenty hours or more weekly in the Catholic school system are required to comply with this policy.

Requirements:

Each employee, as defined above, must participate in at least six (6) clock hours of religious education and/or formation each year.

In addition, at least one formal class* in theology must be taken every five (5) years. The timeline and options for fulfilling the policy allow flexibility in completing these important requirements.

Administrators and teachers who do not comply with this policy will jeopardize their good standing in the Diocese of Gary. Non-compliance with the policy may affect the contract offer.

A summary of all activity to comply with the policy will be completed yearly and submitted to the building principal. A verification of the formal class requirement is also completed and submitted.

(See form: Record of Religious Education/Faith Formation)

Copies of all documents are forwarded to the Office of Catholic Schools.

Many opportunities for fulfilling these requirements are available:

Local school days of retreat/reflection

Faculty in-service days

Parish-sponsored days of retreat/recollection

Parish sponsored "missions"

Classes established locally through the school, the religious education program, or the parish

Workshops, seminars, presentations, retreats both inside and outside the diocese

The Emmaus Program

The Diocese of Gary Lay Ministry Program

College credit courses in theology and/or religious studies

* A **formal class (ex. The Emmaus Program)** is defined as one that is

- † Led by a qualified instructor, i.e. someone with credentials in the subject area
- † Requires at least 8 hours of instruction/interaction
- † Focuses on a topic such as:

Revelation and Faith: Scripture, Tradition, Christology, the Church, Doctrine

Profession of Faith: the Creed

Liturgy, Sacraments, and Prayer

Catholic Morality: Life in Christ, Moral Development, Conscience, Human Sexuality

Catechetics: Catechetical Documents, Contemporary Catechetical Issues, Methods of Teaching Religion

Introduction to the Catholic Church and Her Teachings: An exploratory class designed for non-Catholic teachers.

Classes may be established by the principal with pre-approval by the Superintendent of Schools. A formal request for approval of courses has been established.

(See form: Application Form for Approval of Programs in Religious Education/Faith Formation)