

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

CHILDREN WHO ARE HOME SCHOOLED

Whether their children attend a parish religious education program, a Catholic school, or are instructed at home, parents are required to participate actively in preparing their children to receive the sacraments, especially First Confession, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. This includes participation in the parish sacramental preparation programs and sacramental celebrations. In light of the entire process for catechesis to include the four components of knowledge, community, service and worship, home schooling alone cannot replace catechesis or sacramental preparation in the parish church (see NCD 32; GCD 17; CT 202-26).

POLICY

Keeping in mind that parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith, we also recognize that the sacraments are most properly celebrated within the parish community. The rights and responsibilities of all concerned, parents, pastors and parish, calls for everyone to work together in this endeavor.

GUIDELINES

Materials must be on the approved list provided by the Office of Religious Education.

- The preferred text will be the one used in the parish religious education program.
- The pastor or pastoral administrator will approve the home program and texts
- The home schoolers will follow the Religion Education Guidelines for the Diocese
- The pastor, pastoral administrator or delegate will meet periodically with the home schoolers to review the progress of the program.

Reception of the sacraments will be celebrated in the family's parish of registration.

In accord with the norms established by the diocesan bishop, the pastor is to make particular provision:

- 1° that suitable catechesis is given for the celebration of the sacraments;*
- 2° that children are properly prepared for the first reception of the sacraments of penance and Most Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of confirmation by means of a catechetical formation given over an appropriate period of time;*
- 3° children are more fruitfully and deeply instructed through catechetical formation after the reception of First Communion (Canon 777.1.2.3.).*

PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Persons with developmental disabilities have a right to participate in the sacraments as full functioning members of the local ecclesial community (see Canon 213). Ministers are not to refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, who are properly disposed, and who are not prohibited by law from receiving them (see Canon 843, §1)

POLICY

Persons with developmental or mental disabilities are to be encouraged either directly or through their parents or guardian to receive the Sacraments at the appropriate time.

GUIDELINES

Parents, guardians, pastors and pastoral administrators have the responsibility to see that persons with disabilities are welcomed by the community, are appropriately prepared, and are properly disposed to receive the sacrament for which they are being prepared.

- Fullness of initiation, and the grace received from it, is of greater value than program preparation
- Suitable instruction, directly related to the celebration of the sacrament and appropriate to the developmental need of the individual, is to take place.
- *Pastors, pastoral administrators or their delegates are to consult with the Diocesan Office regarding decisions that will make exemptions to the stated diocesan policy.*