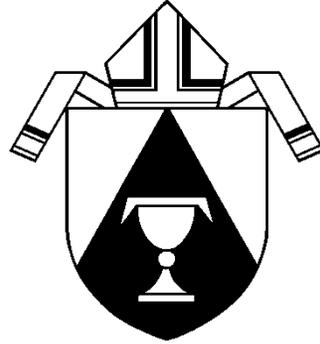


Sacramento Catholic Diocese

2020



Guidelines for Master Catechists

Office of Family & Faith Formation

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Revised & Updated, February 2020

Background

According to the *California Catholic Conference Guidelines for Catechist Certification (2009)*, Master Catechists are “extensions of the teaching office of the Bishop, and are selected and commissioned to:

- A. Provide the specific formation and courses of studies and evaluations required by the diocese for catechists to obtain or renew a California Catechist Certificate.
- B. Provide workshops and in-services for the continued growth and formation of catechists and Catholic School teachers.
- C. Be willing to participate as a member of a catechetical leadership visioning Team.”

Furthermore, the California Bishops recommend that “in addition to the ‘Personal Qualities of a Catechist,’ the Master Catechist should have:

- A. A current California Catechist Certificate
- B. Proven expertise and recent experience in catechetical ministry at various age levels
- C. An ability to communicate and work effectively with adult learners in a formation setting
- D. The personal recommendation of the candidate’s pastor or other catechetical leader
- E. Evidence of ongoing education in: Theology, Catechesis, the teachings of the Church and Spiritual Development in light of Vatican II and post-conciliar Documents
- F. Evidence of the ability to work in multi-cultural situations
- G. An understanding of the purpose of the Master Catechist and a willingness to serve as such when certified
- H. An ability to study at an advanced level.”

The *Strategic Plan for the Diocese of Sacramento (2012)* calls for the development of “a native faculty of men and women to be master catechists so that there is a ready number of teachers for the ongoing formation of lay catechists and lay ministers in the Church.”

The strategic plan also recognizes that “an increase in the number of Master Catechists and certified basic catechists will allow the parishes to improve the quality of parish-based catechetical programs as well as expand opportunities for cradle-to-grave formation. The Diocese will have available a more accessible faculty of committed, competent Catholic catechists with whom to promote the on-going cultivation and training of catechists.”

Selection Criteria for Master Catechists

- A. Candidate must have a degree or advanced studies in Theology, Pastoral Ministry or related fields
- B. Candidate must have proven teaching experience
- C. Candidate must be willing and able to teach diocesan certification and specialization courses

Application process

- A. Exploratory conversations (potential candidate discusses master catechist certification opportunities with pastor and diocesan lay formation staff).
- B. Documentation (potential candidate provides documentation of advanced studies in theology, pastoral ministry or related fields to diocesan lay formation staff).
- C. Complete the Examination for Master Catechists (able to be taken once every 6 months)
- D. Observation (diocesan staff observes candidate teaching a catechist formation class) – see Rubrics for Observation.
- E. Interview (OFFF Director and Lay Formation staff review candidate’s formation and teaching background, go over evaluation of observed class, and review concept and implications of Master Catechist Certificate).
- F. Pastor’s recommendation (will be requested by diocesan lay formation staff).

Certification

- A. Upon successful completion of the application process, a Master Catechist Certificate will be issued by the Diocese of Sacramento
- B. Certificate is valid for three years

Role of Master Catechist

- A. Be the liaison between a Diocesan Formation Center and the Diocese of Sacramento
- B. Oversee the academic administration of a Diocesan Formation Center
- C. Assist other diocesan formation sites with Certification and Renewal classes – if needed
- D. Assist in curriculum development for Basic Certification, Renewal and Ministry Specialization classes
- E. Mentor new catechists in their development

Renewal of Certificate

- A. Have completed 25 hours of service to the diocese per year, at least 10 of which must have been completed through teaching at a Formation Center
- B. Have continued personal development through ongoing formation (see below), including annual retreat
- C. Have received Pastor’s recommendation (will be requested by diocesan lay formation staff)

Ongoing formation

- A. Participate in Diocesan in-service offerings for teachers and Master Catechists
- B. In consultation with the Director of the OFFF, continue a program of advanced studies in theology, pastoral ministry or related fields as indicated by the Diocese of Sacramento