

## ELEMENTARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMS VANCOUVER ARCHDIOCESE

The goal of Religious Education in the elementary program is to teach the faith so that students will come to know, love, and serve God. The teacher/catechist works in collaboration with the parents, who are the primary educators of the child. With the animation and support of the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education and guidance of the pastor and the Catholic school Principal/PREP Coordinator, the teacher/catechist teaches a curriculum which is facilitated through a program and other resources.

While the curriculum, program and resources are helpful, the embodiment of teaching is the teacher/catechist who witnesses God's love for the student and what it means to be a faithful disciple. Teachers/Catechists need to be chosen with utmost care and given basic and ongoing formation, so that they can teach with skill and commitment. Recruitment of teachers and catechists is covered in other archdiocesan policies.

In choosing programs for the Vancouver Archdiocese, the following criteria have been reviewed:

- Sound faith and moral doctrine based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Holistic approach (head, heart & feet) to ensure that the aim of catechesis be attained, namely, Christian living in the Church and the world
- Development of prayer - private and communal
- Opportunities for theological reflection so that the child can relate his/her own experiences and story to the way of discipleship
- A call to the service of charity and justice with ideas for specific application
- Age appropriate language and activities
- Developmentally appropriate faith and moral formation
- Comprehensive teacher resource manual which promotes an integrated approach to catechesis leading to knowing, loving and serving

Three programs which meet the above criteria were selected for use in the Vancouver archdiocese. They are the *Christ our Life Series*, *Born of the Spirit Program*, and *Call to Faith* program. The major reason for choosing just three programs is to facilitate in-service and ongoing formation in the specific programs. The decision on which of the three programs will be used in the local parish and school programs rests with the Pastor in consultation with the PREP Coordinator, and, where applicable, the school Principal. In special circumstances, other programs may be approved with special written permission from the Archbishop.

Other programs which are approved as supplementary to these main programs are:

- a) Chastity Formation: The *Love and Life Series*
- b) Sacramental Preparation: The *We Celebrate Reconciliation, Eucharist & Confirmation Series*
- c) New Catholic Preparation: The *Heritage Series*

Updated: May 2005