



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

Memorandum

July 24, 2020

To: Pastors, Faith Formation Ministry Leaders

From: Dcn. Modesto Cordero, Lisa Gomes, Jayne Mondoy

Re: Framework for Faith Formation Programs (FY 2020-2021)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (nos. 2221 – 2231) emphasizes the essential role of the family in passing on the faith. Faith formation ministries, therefore, must reach out and accompany families, giving witness to an ever-deepening relationship with the Lord and equipping them to transmit the Christian faith in the home and out in the community.

Faith Formation programs often minister to family members in separate groups consisting of children, youth, or adults. While this peer approach has its merits, it often fails to equip the whole family to grow as Christian disciples. The family – the domestic church – is vital to the universal Church.

While we face some significant challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Holy Spirit has continued to inspire within us new possibilities for ministry. So let us work together to form a framework of faith formation for the family that builds upon our strengths and sets a new vision for the future.

Questions or concerns should be directed to:

Catechumenate/Order for Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)

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Framework for Faith Formation Programs (FY 2020-2021)

Note: Faith Formation Programs have as their primary objective the formation of disciples of Jesus Christ. They include but are not limited to Religious Education; Youth Ministry; Young Adult Ministry, Family Ministry, the catechumenate (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults), etc.

Part One: Reflect

Form a Parish Team

Parish leaders are encouraged to form a collaborative parish team which includes, if possible, the pastor (or clergy member), faith formation leaders, a representative of the parish's parochial school (if applicable), and one or two parents and catechists. Do not let the pandemic drive your planning. Plan first for successful formation of disciples.

Set Goals

Essential question: How well do we reach out and accompany families, giving witness to an ever-deepening relationship with the Lord and equipping them to transmit the Christian faith in the home and out in the community?

- What is the mission of your ministry?
- What are the needs of our community?
- How can we creatively meet those needs?
- Is the mission of faith formation to form disciples or to deliver content? Perhaps it is a bit of both, but without the initial relationship, the content can fall on deaf ears. How can we build a relationship with our children, young people, and their families?
- Many young people still feel isolated, disconnected, and long to know that they are loved. How can our parish community respond creatively to these needs?
- In light of what is needed, what are our current goals?
 - With families?
 - With children and young people?
 - With catechists?

Define Objectives

Objectives define strategies or implementation steps to attain identified goals. They are specific, often measurable, and have a defined completion date.

- What are specific objectives that will help us accomplish our goals?
- What are the parameters in which we must work?
 - Within a safe environment.



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- Following CDC and local guidelines.
- Budget
- Facility availability
- What strategies will we use to achieve our goal?
- List all events, programs, initiatives, and strategies that you have been using in your ministry. It might be helpful to note whether each one is:
 - Gathered physically
 - Gathered digitally
 - Blended digital and non-digital
 - Non-gathered, non-digital (i.e., mail, personal delivery)
 - Non-gathered digital (i.e., social media, electronic mail, etc.)
- For each of the items on your list, answer the following questions (there might be more than one response for each question):
 - What need has this been responding to?
 - What objectives or goals has this been intended to achieve?
 - Have we been successful and effective? How do we know?
- Make a new list naming all the needs, goals, and objectives you identified
 - Is there anything that is no longer needed?
 - Is anything missing? What are the needs now (that may or may not have existed before)?
 - What are our priorities at this time?

Change is always difficult, but (especially this year) it's inevitable. Use this opportunity to connect your young people and their families with the parish in creative, productive ways.

Part Two: Create a Plan

Every parish is asked to create a plan based on one of these three following scenarios. You do not need to send in your plans to the diocese. This guide is simply to challenge you to think creatively and beyond the status quo.

Select a Program “Delivery” Option:

Option A - In-person only

Option B - Hybrid (online/in-person)

Option C - Online only

How will the parish accommodate persons who are uncomfortable with returning or who have limited or no access to a computer or mobile device?



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Determine the Schedule: There is no need to rush into starting in August/September. Be mindful that students and families are facing major changes in school schedules and family routines.

Consider Staff Needs: By whom will the program be staffed? Due to the new coronavirus, not all catechists may feel ready to return to ministry. Plan for catechetical development, spiritual formation, and technology training needs.

Review Budget Needs: Catechists may need to be provided with the tools for virtual teaching. Additionally, the program will require cleaning and possibly extra program supplies to avoid sharing unsanitized items among students. Questions to consider:

- What are the associated costs with providing catechists and possibly some families with access to needed resources?
- Will there be extra costs for printing materials for those who do not have access to a computer or printer?

Part Three: Review Infectious Disease Prevention Measures

Read thoroughly and follow the comprehensive CDC guidelines in the [Appendix](#). Key considerations include:

Coming and Going: Ensure that you have established policies for dropping off and picking up minors thereby limiting the number of individuals on campus at any given time.

Checking In: Create a process for screening all program participants, catechists, other volunteers, and visitors in a safe and respectful manner. Screening may include no touch temperature checks, general symptom checking, and having a designated space for those who show signs of illness. Process all persons who show signs of illness with the highest levels of confidentiality, dignity, and respect.

Face Coverings: Face coverings must be worn by all persons, at all times. Disposable masks should be available in case a need arises. *Wearing of masks is appropriate only if a child can safely and reliably wear, remove, and handle the masks following CDC guidelines throughout the day. Children under 2, and anyone with trouble breathing, should not wear a cloth face covering.*

Prayer: Prayer should be an integral part of every program in our parishes. Prayer services can be held, but proper social distancing, wearing of face coverings, and cleaning protocols should be followed. Be aware of state and county guidelines regarding gathering capacity.



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Consistency in Practice: All employees and volunteers should know what to do when a participant is ill and be well versed with all policies, procedures, and practices regarding the parish's response to the pandemic.

Signage: Post signs in highly visible locations to promote awareness of the parish's protective measures, policies, procedures, and practices such as proper hand washing, proper wearing of face coverings, social distancing, and staying home when ill

Travel and Retreats: All offsite travel and overnight retreats should be suspended indefinitely. Engage in virtual activities and events to enhance your program objectives.

Avoid Sharing Items: Please refrain from sharing bowls of candy and various other food. Discourage the sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. Establish a cleaning schedule for all equipment, materials, and devices that must be shared.

Questions to consider:

- Will textbooks, resources, or sacramentals stay at the parish or go back and forth?

Hand Hygiene: Encourage participants to frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Adequate healthy hygiene supplies/products should be available such as soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.

Stay at Home if Sick: Educate all participants, employees, catechists, and other volunteers about the importance of staying home when sick and when they can return to the parish.

Visitors: Limit all nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups and organizations.

Separate Personal Items: Ensure that each student's personal belongings are separate from others.

Ventilation: When possible, open windows for greater natural air circulation.

Cleaning and Disinfection: Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, sink handles, light switches, etc. at least daily or between use as much as possible. Provide guides and schedules of when hands should be washed and surfaces should be cleaned. Students should wash their hands before entering the meeting space on any occasion. Restrooms should be checked regularly to ensure soap and towel dispenser are filled.



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Breaks: Monitor breaks both inside and outside the meeting space carefully. Participants should wash hands after breaks.



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Appendix

Guidelines for Disease Control and Prevention

Parishes are required to adhere to the following guidelines based upon information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Conduct a thorough and detailed cleaning of the meeting space, with focus on high-contact areas (e.g., equipment, sacramentals).
- Sanitize high-touch surfaces before and after sessions (e.g., door handles, tables, chairs).
- Clean and sanitize restrooms regularly based on frequency of use.
- Disinfect tables and chairs before and after each session.
- Provide hand sanitizer or wipes.
- Avoid use of items (e.g. rugs, mats) that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
- Close off areas used by any sick person and do not use them until they have been cleaned. Wait 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting to reduce risk to individuals cleaning. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants. Keep disinfectant products away from children and stored in a secured area.
- If needed, arrange to store individual parish-owned items (e.g. reusable name tags, books, and other resources) in individually labeled storage bags and clean after each use.

Physical Distancing

- Maintain six feet of physical distance between non-household participants.
- Establish arrival and departure procedures.
- Establish entrance and exit procedures.
- If needed, implement delayed or staggered schedules, including dismissal and time spent outdoors and for any communal spaces.
- Establish room capacity.
- Limit movement and intermingling of groups across facilities.
- Turn desks/chairs to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) or have participants sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- Participants are to store their own individual water bottles or food items.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each person instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing of food and utensils.
- If possible, participants are to bring their own supplies to minimize sharing of high



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touch materials to the extent possible or limit use of supplies and equipment by one person at a time and clean and disinfect between use.

Health and Safety

- Post [visual reminders](#) of personal hygiene practices.
- Train all ministry staff on [symptom detection](#) and [prevention](#).
- Anyone with cold symptoms, high temperatures or suspicious rash will need to remain at home until symptom free without medication for 48-hours. Anyone who becomes ill during a session will wait away from others in a designated area. Keep minors under adult supervision. Anyone who is sick must be picked up by a parent or depart the facility within 30-minutes of onset of illness.
- All persons must wear a face mask and wash hands frequently.
- Per CDC guidelines, anyone with trouble breathing should not wear a mask. A written medical exemption from a U.S. registered physician is required.
- An ambulance will be requested by a program leader for anyone whose life is at risk (such as fever >103, difficulty breathing, unable to speak, has increasing severe pain, and other perceived life-threatening symptoms).
- Notify local health officials, teachers, and families immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Require participants and facilitators to quarantine per Hawai'i public health guidelines if exposed or suspected exposure to COVID-19.

Facility safety

- Limit visitors to the program.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air by opening windows and doors, using fans, and other methods.
- Have trained back-up facilitators in order to maintain sufficient program staffing levels.
- Verify that participants and facilitators who have traveled outside of Hawaii have not experienced COVID-19 symptoms for a minimum 14 days prior to return (for children in care, program leaders will need to verify with the parents of the child of any experienced symptoms the child may have).
- Program leaders will provide ample gloves, cleansers, hand soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectants and disinfectant wipes to meet cleaning/sanitizing/disinfecting requirements.



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Participant Expectations

- Post [signs](#) throughout the facility on shared responsibilities (including proper hygiene and sanitization, face coverings and information for reporting concerns).
- Use communication methods (such as email, text messages and/or notices) to educate others on what to expect when at the facility.

Staff Support

- Conduct training on cleaning, sanitation and safety protocols prior to program re-opening and on an as-needed basis to remain informed of state recommended policy changes.
- Pastors and program leaders will be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Facilitators will know who the pastor and program leader and how to contact them.