



Official Communique No. 22

Diocesan Commission for Catechesis

1. THE BISHOP, THE PERSON PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR CATECHESIS
 - a) The Bishop has the prime responsibility for the catechetical mission and its implementation (*General Directory for Catechesis*, Nos. 222-223).
 - b) This prime responsibility is exercised by the Bishop through defining the general orientations which will guide the development of the catechetical initiative and its implementation. He is the one who proclaims the catechetical mission, decides on any necessary modifications to it and gives his approval to the programs, initiatives and tools that will be used.
 - c) In order to achieve this:
 - I. He is assisted in the lines of authority by various organizational bodies that he consults, to either define orientations or determine how to implement them (EDD, CDP, Presbyteral Council);
 - II. Still in his line of authority, he is assisted by persons delegated by the Bishop in regional councils and in the Anglophone Pastoral Unit to represent him in a variety of contexts;
 - III. To ensure the human resources necessary for implementing the catechetical initiative, not only through recruiting but also through formation, he is assisted by the Diocesan Human Resources Department;
 - IV. To assist him in supervising the implementation of the catechetical initiative and updating the supporting orientations, the Bishop institutes the Diocesan Commission for Catechesis;
 - V. In his thinking, the Bishop is assisted by the same councils and individuals and, particularly, by the departments and individuals more directly responsible for the implementation of the catechetical initiative.

VI. To bolster communities in implementing the catechetical initiative, the Bishop entrusts the Catechetical Mission Team from the Diocesan Pastoral Care Coordination Service with assisting, through their expertise and skills, the local leadership in carrying out their responsibilities.

d) The diocesan catechetical mission addresses recipients in the whole community and in every generation: children, adolescents, young adults, adults and seniors.

2. MISSION, COMPOSITION OF THE DIOCESAN COMMISSION FOR CATECHESIS AND TERM OF MANDATES

a) Its Mission

The Bishop entrusts the Diocesan Commission for Catechesis with the mission of overseeing the completion of the catechetical initiative in the diocese in the light of the orientations he has defined. The Commission is kept informed of the progressive completion of the catechetical initiative, takes stock of achievements and difficulties, analyzes situations, develops – depending on the issues – avenues of discussion for solutions, informs the Bishop of the results of these analyses and makes appropriate recommendations to him to ensure the execution is in line with the defined orientations that enable the Bishop to make the necessary decisions for the progressive completion of the initiative (corrections being applied to initial plans, necessary new decisions, issues to be settled...). It responds to requests directed to them by the Bishop. In every aspect of its mission, the Commission then is a stakeholder in the completion of the diocesan initiative. It also keeps abreast of the orientations that, under the auspices of the Assembly of Québec Catholic Bishops, take shape at the provincial level and, to the extent possible, that emerge from the thought and practice of other dioceses.¹

The Diocesan Commission for Catechesis reports in its mandate to the Bishop.

¹ To further clarify the mission of the Commission diocésaine pour la catéchèse, we can draw inspiration from what is stated regarding the main tasks of the diocesan catechetical office (*Officium catechisticum*) in No. 266 of the *General Directory for Catechesis*.

b) Its composition

The commission is presided over by the leader of the Diocesan Pastoral Care Coordination Service. The Bishop nominates other individuals in various communities from among pastoral staff and volunteers, including one individual exercising responsibilities in the Anglophone Region.

It should be expected from Commission members a good understanding of the orientations of the catechetical mission, attentiveness as to what is happening in the communities, a capability of viewing with detachment grassroot practices so as to be in a position to discern carefully the problems that arise and to propose suitable solutions.

c) Its mandate

Individuals coming from the Catechetical Mission Team from the Diocesan Pastoral Care Coordination Service are ex-officio members of the Commission.

Individuals coming from the communities who sit on the Diocesan Commission for Catechesis have a mandate for a three-year (3) term, that is renewable once.

3. SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS REGARDING CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- The basic responsibilities assumed in the parishes are of paramount importance. Vital responsibility lies with catechists as well as the volunteers assisting them. Responsibility for the catechetical mission, however, must be backed and shared by the whole pastoral team, even by the parish community as a whole. Fundamental responsibility lies with the priest, who is duty-bound “to foster a sense of common responsibility for catechesis in the Christian community, a task which involves all, and a recognition and appreciation for catechists and their mission” (*General Directory for Catechesis*, No. 225).
- Members of the Diocesan Pastoral Care Coordination Service have the responsibility of bolstering the communities in achieving their tasks. Occasionally, they should also contribute to developing the orientations and decisions being made by submitting their observations to the Diocesan Commission for Catechesis. They are also called upon to stay attuned to the communities so as to be familiar with community practices, their achievements, their difficulties and their issues.

- Finally, the Diocesan Pastoral Care Coordination Service members work closely with the Diocesan Institute for Theological and Pastoral Formation to offer pastoral staff and volunteers the required formation for carrying out the catechetical mission in the diocese.

Given at Longueuil, on the 21st day of September Two thousand fourteen, Catechesis Sunday.

† Lionel Gendron, p.s.s.
Bishop of Saint Jean-Longueuil

Jean-Pierre Camerlain, priest,
Episcopal Vicar for the Chancery