

DEPARTMENT of CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Office of Catechesis for Children

2170 E. Victory Drive
Savannah, GA 31404
912-201-4044

JUNE, 2020

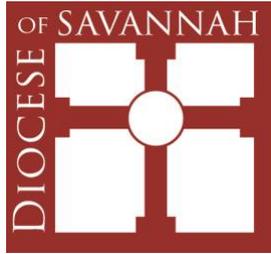
Guidelines for Summer PREP Classes, VBS, and Sacramental Formation:

- If PREP classes have not been able to continue remotely during quarantine, formation should be offered for students who are in need of final formation for the sacraments. This should take first priority over other PREP classes. This formation should focus on what is most essential for fruitful reception of the Sacrament.
- Consider different modes of this formation to minimize risk levels (online, small group, remote with parent involvement).
- The following linked federal and state guidelines should be reviewed and followed in any in person classes and events: [CDC Checklist for Community and Faith Leaders](#) and, as applicable, [Guidance for Childcare, Schools and Youth Programs](#).
- For the celebration of Confirmation, please follow Fr. Firmin's directives letter sent to all pastors.
- Other parish programs are able to resume if they can meet current CDC and state criteria. VBS programs should follow summer camp guidelines from the State of Georgia.

Guiding Principles in Preparation for Fall Programs:

As parishes consider planning for next year's catechetical programs, there are many variables to consider. In addition to following current state and CDC guidance, we share the following principles to consider in the planning process. These guidelines are in addition to Fr. Frimin's current reopening guidelines, and should be read in light of those.

- **Subsidiarity:** Decisions should be made at the lowest possible level. Local pastors and DREs know the situation in their respective parishes and communities best. The following considerations are offered to help pastors and catechetical leaders make the best decisions for their parishes in the concrete circumstances in which they find themselves. The Office of Catechesis for Children aims to support the planning process of pastors and Catechetical Leaders and is happy to help them devise a plan that best fits a parish's needs.
- **Follow Local and State Guidelines:** Each parish should consider the same plans Georgia schools will consider in reopening for the fall year. See [Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 schools](#).
- **Our Mission and Primary Catechists:** Our mission is to evangelize and form disciples. Parents, by their vocation, are called to be primary catechists of their children and be the first proclaimers



DEPARTMENT of CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Office of Catechesis for Children

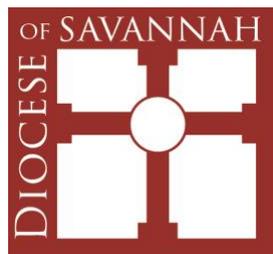
2170 E. Victory Drive
Savannah, GA 31404
912-201-4044

of the Gospel to them. We should seek to help and empower them to live this role. However, many families are unequipped to share and teach the faith to their children. The role of the parish must be to aid and support parents in this process, and if necessary at times, help them to reencounter “the reason of our hope.”

- **Creativity in the New Evangelization:** We are in a time where many traditional models may not be possible with social distancing standards. This is an opportunity to think creatively of new ways to respond to the call for “new ardor, and new methods” called forth in the New Evangelization.
- **Family Capabilities:** Many of our parishes have students without reliable internet, this should be considered in any program choices.
- **Limitations of Digital & Remote Learning:** Digital tools and resources abound, and many resources that exist can help us advance the mission of the church. However, there is no replacement for real relationships and the witness of the community of faith in person. For this reason, we recommend that plans including digital or remote programs do not completely replace in-person experiences in the parish. Many parishes may decide to do a blend of remote and in person models to allow for minimal risk.

Some models to consider:

1. **Family Hybrid Learning Model:** Family based models encourage 1-2 sessions per month at home, taught by parents, and 1-2 sessions per month taught in the parish, often with a simultaneous parent session. In these programs, there is one topic taught in a cycle format with applications for children of different ages. With this sort of model, a parish with space constraints could offer sessions on alternating weeks reducing the number of students and families in a classroom at a time. This also eases the burden on the amount of trained catechists necessary in a program.
2. **Traditional Publisher Texts with Hybrid Resources:** Many traditional publishers have designed resources for their grade level and sacramental preparation programs. This can allow some lessons to be completed remotely with families. Some programs have resources that require internet access for families.
3. **Multiple Class Offerings:** If possible, parishes may consider offering additional classes to allow for smaller class sizes. This, of course, will require additional Catechists or Catechists committed to teaching multiple classes.
4. **Alternating Weeks & Longer Class times:** This model allows for parishes who cannot meet more than once a week reduce the total number of students in a classrooms. For this model to be



DEPARTMENT of CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Office of Catechesis for Children

2170 E. Victory Drive
Savannah, GA 31404
912-201-4044

successful, consideration will need to be given in how to best cover the necessary material while keeping students engaged. Project based learning, take home activities and lessons may need to be utilized.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Catechesis for Children for suggestions of programs that could work well with the possible models or to help strategize ways to help fill parish needs.