**Does the Office of Faith Formation recommend a particular textbook series for use in the parish and Catholic schools?**

We carefully screen and recommend textbooks for your religious education programs for ages Pre-Kindergarten through High School. Currently, we recommend the following four series as outstanding choices for your comprehensive religious education programs. All of these series have been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and are found on the 2019 Conformity List. In the past, these publishers have provided the diocese with well-qualified speakers who conduct catechist workshops without charge. These training sessions are held yearly at our annual Diocesan Pastoral Congress and also may be arranged for deaneries through the Office of Faith Formation.



**Sadlier Religion Publishers-** <https://religionstore.sadlier.com/>

This textbook series offers bi-lingual (English-Spanish) textbooks. Sadlier has many downloadable resources for families and catechists. The children’s books are colorful and contain age-appropriate activities and solid faith formation linked to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* Their authors carefully put together many resources to facilitate teaching the faith for catechists. Sadlier has been a generous supporter of faith formation for many years and their textbook authors are first-rate.



**Loyola Press-** <https://www.loyolapress.com/products/faith-formation>

Loyola Press offers excellent online support for their textbook series. They are a non-profit organization that supports families and catechists with interesting articles, free catechist training, and many special worksheets to strengthen family catechesis. They also publish texts for use with Spanish-speakers. Their textbooks are written by the Sisters of Notre Dame who incorporate their excellent pedagogical experience in these texts. Their methods are easy to use and popular with religious educators.



**RCL/Benziger -** [**https://www.rclbenziger.com/family-faith**](https://www.rclbenziger.com/family-faith)

This company has also supported catechist formation and family catechesis for many years. They provide consultants who assist DRE’s using their products. Their *Echoes of Faith* catechist formation program is endorsed and recommended by the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership as the premier program for thorough preparation of volunteer catechists. Their texts are colorful, appealing to young people and provide assessment tools for teachers and catechists to evaluate the progress of their students. They have bi-lingual Spanish and bilingual Vietnamese editions.



**Our Sunday Visitor -** [**https://osvcurriculum.com/**](https://osvcurriculum.com/)

Our Sunday Visitor has many excellent resource persons who support their effective methods of teaching the faith. They offer materials for families who desire to become involved in their children’s religious education classes. They are unfailingly generous in offering speakers for our Diocesan Pastoral Congress and they maintain high quality products. OSV promotes methods founded on solid research and collaboration with clinical psychologists They offer a well-known and carefully written family life series as well.

**WHAT SHOULD a PASTOR CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A NEW TEXTBOOK SERIES FOR OUR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM?** ( All of our four recommended religion text publishers meet the following criteria.)

* **Have the textbook authors designed a curriculum that uses age- appropriate, professionally- endorsed teaching methods in their lessons plans?**
* **Do the authors provide references that link lesson plan outcomes to the teachings of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church?***
* **Do the text authors assist teachers and catechists in implementation of the six tasks of catechesis as outlined in the *National Directory for Catechesis?(USCCB)***
* **Is the publisher listed on the 2019 USCCB Conformity List?**
* **Is the program part of a comprehensive religion education approach or does it simply target one aspect of religious education such as sacramental preparation?**
* **Is the vocabulary of the text easily read and understood by each age group?**
* **Does the company support the use of their texts by periodically providing free online trainings, diocesan workshops for catechists and ongoing education for religious educators?**
* **Does the textbook series provide multi- media supplements that support presentations in the classroom?**
* **Does the use of media assist the young person to express the faith to others?**
* **Does the publisher provide assessment tools that are appropriate for children who have varied learning styles?**
* **Are the lesson plans crafted so as to offer a loving, hope-filled view of God and creation?**
* **Do the lesson plans help young people fall in love with Jesus and to understand that God loves them and is always kind and merciful?**
* **Do the student assessments prepare students to show evidence of their learning on the ACRE instruments?**
* **Does the company provide lesson plans with quality artwork, musical resources and other activities that nurture the Catholic imagination and support inculturation within diverse ethnic backgrounds?**
* **Is the text cost per pupil affordable for the parish so that each child will have use of a durable text?**

**CATECHIST FORMATION SERVICES- Help from the Diocesan Offices of Faith Formation**

1. **Every director of religious education in a parish should hold a valid Basic Catechist Certificate. Applications for certification are approved by the Director of the Office of Faith Formation, the local pastor and by Bishop Oscar A. Solis. Forty eight (48) classroom hours of approved formation must be completed in accordance with the California Conference of Catechetical Leadership Standards.**
2. **If not currently certified, each catechist should be encouraged to work toward Basic Catechist Certification.**
3. **When certified, an experienced director of religious education may offer catechist formation classes within the parish. This should be approved by the pastor. The Office of Faith Formation will consult and provide assistance to DRE’s who request help with catechist training.**
4. **Catechist formation is currently offered in English and Spanish classes through the Diocese of Salt Lake City. Online classes approved by the Diocesan Director also may be used to fulfill certification requirements.**
5. **Basic Catechist Certificates are good for three years from date of issue. Renewal is available. Catechists should earn 10 hours of ongoing education each year for a total of 30 hours for certificate renewal.**
6. **Master catechist certificates are issued to those who have participated in the lay ecclesial ministry formation program and completed projects in catechesis. Individuals holding a Masters in Pastoral Ministry ( MAPS ), Religious Education (MRE) or Divinity (M. Div) should submit an application to the Office of Faith Formation. Renewals after five years are issued with evidence of continuing education.**

**ANNUAL DIOCESAN PASTORAL CONGRESS**

**Each September, the Office of Faith Formation offers a full day of keynote speakers, workshops and special classes for all interested adults. The Congress is held at Juan Diego Catholic High School. Following Eucharist concelebrated with Bishop Solis, clergy and laity spend the day learning more about sharing our faith, and enjoy attending workshops and participating in discussions. Each year a theme is chosen. In 2019, the theme was *Increase Our Faith. Confirm Our Hope.* Our Pastoral Congress features nationally- known speakers and the people of God in Utah enjoy a day of learning and fellowship with breakfast and lunch together. Around 600 people normally attend this event.**

**DIOCESAN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CONGAR INSTITUTE FOR MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT**

**Our Diocese offers qualified women and men a four year formation program leading to certification and commissioning by Most Reverend Oscar A. Solis. Lay people apply for the program, are screened and then study as a group for four years. The areas of formation are theological and ministry studies, learning more about working with others (human formation skills), pastoral studies and spiritual formation.**

**When the group successfully completes the four year program, they are commissioned for service in the Diocese of Salt Lake City as lay ecclesial ministers. This program is offered in English and in Spanish.**

**Many classes for this program are provided through the Congar Institute for Ministry Development of San Antonio, Texas. The Institute sends us guest lecturers who are priests, sisters and qualified professors from schools of theology around the U.S. Classes meet on weekends. The LEMs minister as religious education directors, RCIA leaders, jail and youth ministers in parishes, chaplains in hospitals, and in many other collaborative settings.**

**LENTEN RETREAT**

**Each year the Office of Faith Formation offers a diocesan day of Lenten prayer and retreat. Guest retreat masters from the Congar Institute lead reflections on Lenten themes. Bishop Oscar A. Solis presides at Mass and luncheon is provided. The Diocesan Lenten retreat is generally held at Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Holladay, UT. Both English and Spanish- speaking retreat masters offer their reflections.**

**DIOCESAN POLICY on PLANNING EVENTS and PRESENTING GUEST SPEAKERS**

**The Diocese of Salt Lake City maintains a calendar of diocesan events online at** [**www.dioslc.org**](http://www.dioslc.org) **. The Vicar General reminds all clergy that parish or regional events should not be scheduled so as to conflict with events offered by the Diocesan Offices such as the Annual Pastoral Congress, the Advent and Lenten Retreats, liturgical dates set by the Office of Worship and diocesan youth convocations.**

**All clergy or lay speakers from outside the diocese must file a Testimony of Suitability or request for approval with the Office of the Bishop before the speaking event may be approved within a parish. This procedure insures that those guest speakers are properly qualified to be teaching the faith and issues of morality and are doing so with the endorsement of their local Bishop. This procedure also insures that such speakers have fulfilled our diocesan Safe Environment requirements in regard to youth and vulnerable adults.**