

Letter From Your Bishop

DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE–SOUTH BEND

Dear Catechists,

The ministry of catechesis is at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelization, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. I want to thank each of you for responding to this call. Sharing the Good News of Jesus with young people is one of the most important ways we can help them become everything that God made them to be and ensure the life of the Church for years to come.

We are excited about this new program to prepare the youth in our diocese for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I have been personally involved with the development of this program and believe it will assist you in handing on the richness of the sacrament and helping your learners understand the steps of the rite and what they mean to us as Catholics.

Good texts can be valuable tools to us as we teach the faith, but the most important tool you have as a catechist is your own faith and witness. The General Directory for Catechesis (our guidebook from the Church about how to hand on the Faith), states, "No methodology, no matter how well tested, can dispense with the person of the catechist in every phase of the catechetical process. The charism given to him by the Spirit, a solid spirituality and transparent witness of life, constitutes the soul of every method. Only his own human and Christian qualities guarantee a good use of texts and other work instruments" (156).

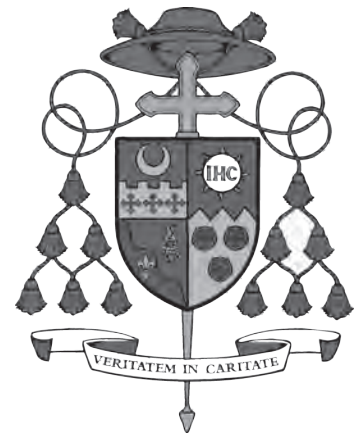
These words give us hope, as they remind us that we really can and do make a difference in the lives of the young people with whom we work. This also calls us to great responsibility, knowing that the next generation is looking to us for guidance, not only in word, but also in action.

May God bless you as you share the treasures of our Catholic Faith with your students!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Kevin C. Rhoades

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne–South Bend



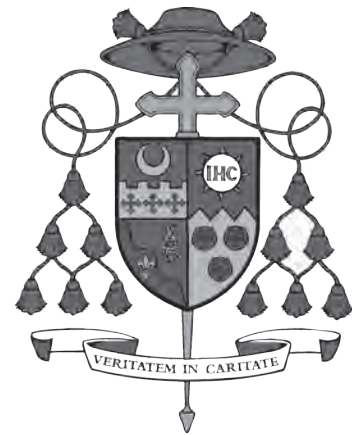
Letter From Your Bishop

DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE–SOUTH BEND

Dear Teachers,

Catholic education is a critical part of the Church's mission of handing on God's Word to the next generation. I want to thank each of you for responding to God's call to the vocation of teaching. Catholic education can help our young people become everything that God made them to be and, in so doing, ensure the life of the Church for years to come.

We are excited about this new program to prepare students in our diocese for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I have been personally involved with the development of this program and believe it will assist you in handing on the richness of the sacrament and helping your students understand the steps of the rite and what they mean to us as Catholics.



In the document *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the bishops of the United States say the following:

The educational mission of the Church is an integrated ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: the message revealed by God (didache) which the Church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit (koinonia); service to the Christian community and the entire human community (diakonia) (14).

Of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the threefold purpose of Christian education among children and young people (see 101).

A good preparation for Confirmation is more than just information about the rite. I urge you to look for opportunities to help your students become aware of what it means to live in the Holy Spirit and to serve the Christian community—to go forth and live what they have received.

May God bless you as you share the treasures of our Catholic Faith with your students!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Kevin C. Rhoades*

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne–South Bend