RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CERTIFICATION FOR PARISH PERSONNEL

I. Parish Personnel Certification
   A. All persons who work with children and youth must be in full compliance with the Diocese of Youngstown Child Protection Policy before an application for religious education certification will be processed.

   B. Parish Elementary Catechist Certificate: CCD Principal and Elementary Catechist

Requirements include completion of 100 hours of formation as follows: Sowing God’s Word (10 hours), Elementary Catechesis: Forming Children as Disciples (10 hours), Catholic Belief and Tradition (20 hours), Introduction to Scripture (20 hours), and General (40 hours).

   C. Parish Adolescent Catechist in Youth Ministry Certificate: Parish Youth Ministry Catechist, Leader, and Advisor

Requirements include completion of 100 hours of formation as follows: Sowing God’s Word (10 hours), Adolescent Catechesis: Forming Youth as Disciples (10 hours), Catholic Belief and Tradition (20 hours), Introduction to Scripture (20 hours), and General (40 hours).

   D. Adult Faith Formation Certificate: Adult Faith Formation Chairperson, Team Member and Facilitator of Faith Sharing/Study Groups

Requirements include completion of 100 hours of formation as follows: Sowing God’s Word (10 hours), Ready Your Hearts (10 hours), Introduction to Scripture (20 hours), Catholic Belief and Tradition (20 hours), and General (40 hours).

   E. Christian Initiation Ministry Certificate: Initiation Team Member

Requirements include completion of 100 hours of formation as follows: Issues In Christian Initiation (20 hours), Sowing God’s Word (10 hours), Ready Your Hearts (10 hours), Introduction to Scripture (20 hours), Catholic Belief and Tradition (20 hours), and General (20 hours).

   F. Parish Director of Religious Education, Director of Youth Ministry, Pastoral Associate, and Diocesan Office of Religious Education Staff

Requirements include a Master’s Degree in Religious Education, or Pastoral Ministry, or approved equivalent, one year of experience in administration and three years of pastoral or catechetical experience. College course areas include: administration, educational methods, supervision, catechetics and theology, scripture, liturgy, sacraments, systematics and morality.

   G. Parish Coordinator of Religious Education, Coordinator of Youth Ministry and Pastoral Minister

Requirements include a Bachelor’s Degree in Religious Education, or Pastoral Ministry, or approved equivalent, one year of experience in administration of Religious Education programs and three years of supervised catechetical or pastoral experience. College course areas include: administration, educational methods, catechetics and theology, scripture, liturgy, sacraments, systematics and morality.
II. Application for Certification

A. Obtaining a Four Year Certificate
1. A Four Year Certificate can be achieved within a five year time span.
2. Persons on interrupted service will be granted extensions appropriate to their absence.

B. Renewal of a Four Year Certificate
1. Renewal of a Four Year Certificate is granted upon completion of 30 clock hours of religious education.

C. Obtaining a One Year Certificate
1. Persons not yet able to apply for a Four Year Certificate will be granted a One Year Certificate annually by the completion of 20 hours for people requiring clock hours or 3-6 college credits for persons requiring college credit hours.
2. Administrators may have a study plan mutually approved by the supervisor – either the superintendent of schools or the diocesan director of religious education, by the pastor, and the administrator.

D. Renewal of a One Year Certificate
1. All One Year Certificates are granted for one year or less. Persons unable to complete the requirements for renewal will maintain post dated certification status and will be ineligible for contract renewal.

III. How to Acquire Hours for Religious Education Certification with College Credit Requirement
1. For persons required to obtain a degree, Loyola of New Orleans Institute for Ministry Extension Program, sponsored by the Office of Religious Education and other accredited Catholic Colleges or Universities are acceptable in obtaining the M.A. in Theology, Religious Studies, or Pastoral Ministry.
2. Persons required to obtain a number of college credits without a degree matriculation, may obtain undergraduate or graduate hours from any Office of Religious Education sponsored college extension courses. Courses in the specific topics must be taken. Transcripts must accompany the application for certification.

IV. How to Acquire Hours for Religious Education Certification with Clock Hour Requirement

A. Programs Sponsored by the Diocese of Youngstown
1. The Office of Religious Education sponsors a variety of programs through the Diocese of Youngstown for the purpose of catechist formation. These programs are always assigned hours for religious education certification. Programs include: Adult Faith Formation Series, Diocesan Conferences and various special workshops.
2. Undergraduate and graduate college courses offered in cooperation with selected Catholic colleges are accepted for religious education certification. Approved college courses may be converted into hours at the ratio of 12 hours per semester credit or 8 hours per quarter credit.
3. Other offices in the Diocese of Youngstown sponsor programs which may be approved for religious education certification. These Offices consult the Office of Religious Education to clarify certification approval for their programs.

B. Programs Sponsored by Catholic Institutions Outside of the Diocese of Youngstown
1. Programs/workshops taken in the area of theology and religious education from a Catholic institution outside the Diocese of Youngstown may be accepted for religious education certification when a brochure or other descriptive information is attached to the application form.
2. Transcripts are required for certification credit for theology courses taken at Catholic colleges. See number 2 for conversion ratio.