



## DIOCESE OF TRENTON

---

Date: May 27, 2021

To: Parish Catechetical Leaders & Catholic School Elementary Principals

Subject: Standards for Safe Environment Program for Children – Article 12 of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 2002

From: Dr. Vincent de Paul Schmidt | Superintendent of Catholic Schools  
Denise Contino | Director of Catechesis  
Margaret Dziminski | Associate Director: Office of Child and Youth Protection  
William Staub | Associate Director: Office of Child and Youth Protection

Bishop David O’Connell informed the diocese on May 3, 2021, that all Religious education programs and Catholic Schools will use either the “RCL Family Life” series or “Growing with God” program for Kindergarten through eighth grade.

### **Diocesan Standards for Safe Environment Program for Children and Youth:**

- **Communication with Parents/Guardians:**
  - Parents/Guardians are to be informed and offered the opportunity to become familiar with the program by the Parish Catechetical Leader/Principal.
  
- **Opt-Out:**
  - Parents/Guardians only have the option to Opt-out of the program after an information meeting or written communication is sent home, parents have requested to meet with the Parish Catechetical Leaders/Principal and understand the details of the program.
  - Opt-out forms should **NEVER** be handed out to parents/guardians.
  - The only time an Opt-out form is presented to a parent/guardian is after a parent/guardian requests a meeting and the actual meeting with the PCL or Principal takes place.
  
- **Teacher and student texts/worksheets** are required for full implementation of the program.
  
- **Parent resources**
  - **RCL - Parent Connection** (booklet) must be made available to all parents for each grade level.
    - Option: Invite parents to return the booklet so it can be used again. A way to save on the cost.
  - **Loyola Press** – Lesson Summaries are to be made available for parents to view either in person or on-line.

- **What do we have to teach?**

<b>School and In-Person Formation</b>		
<b>Loyola Press Growing with God</b>		
Grades K - 4	All 6 lessons	<b>Engage &amp; Explore -</b> Side A of worksheet  <b>Reflect &amp; Respond – if time allows</b> Side B – can be done at home with their parent or in class  Additional Activity (blackline master in the teacher manual) can be sent home
Grades 5 – 8	Lessons 1-5 (Lesson 6 see Human Reproduction optional section)	
<b>RCL Family Life</b>		
Grades K - 8	All 5 units – 10 lessons must be taught	Student textbook and additional activities are available on the RCL website
<b>Virtual and Home Study</b>		
<b>Loyola Press Growing with God</b>		
Grades K - 4	All 6 lessons	Parents should use the At-Home Parent Guide and worksheet to help their children understand the lesson  Students must complete the online review using the QR code on page 4 of the parent guide.
Grades 5 – 8	Lessons 1-5 (Lesson 6 see Human Reproduction optional section)	
<b>RCL Family Life</b>		
Grades K - 8	All 5 units  10 lessons must be taught	Parent Connection Book Student eBooks Online eAssessments

- **Implementation Models**

How do I implement or accomplish this? In addition to the religion curriculum guidelines, below are some ideas for implementation.

**RCL Family Life offers 5 models**

1. Extend catechetical session: Add thirty minutes to your regularly scheduled class time, ten times during the year.
2. Unit based: Suspend regular program for 5 weeks and cover 2 lessons per week
3. Weekend retreat: Schedule 2-3 consecutive weekend days to allow families to come together for reflective study and fellowship as you help break open the lessons
4. Virtual/Home school: Parents are the primary educators of their children and this option offers them the opportunity to teach the program to their child(ren). If this option is offered assistance and oversight will be needed by the PCL/Principal for the families.

5. Summer program: Time can be added to the program ensure implementation of the material or lessons can be taught throughout the year as family catechesis or integration of the material into the summer curriculum map

### **Loyola Press; Growing with God**

1. Fall or Spring Sessions

Teach two lessons per month

- Oct or Feb – Intro lesson & Lesson 1
- Nov or March – Lesson 3 & 5
- Dec or April – Lesson 2 & 4
- Jan or May – Lesson 6 (Grades k – 4 only)

2. Yearly: One lesson per month

3. Summer program

- 2-week model; one lesson every other day
- 1-week model; one lesson per day
- Lessons can be taught through the year as family catechesis

- **Optional Material/Lessons on Human Reproduction:**

- This is **optional** for parishes/schools.
  - This material is not required texts for conformity with article 12 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children*.
- **RCL Family Life: Grades 5/6; must be purchased separately**
- **Loyola Press Growing with God: Grades 5-8 Lesson 6 is included with the overall program**
  - When a parish or school makes the decision to offer this material the following is required:
    - Host a parent meeting (separate from the informational meeting about the overall program) to give a brief overview of the material/lessons.
      - Have the samples available at the meeting.
    - If a separate presentation on this topic is offered for the students' parents must consent to the child's participation.
    - If a parent desired to teach this material to their child at home, the parish/school must provide them with the materials.
      - RCL – Student Human Reproduction booklets
      - Loyola Press- -At-Home Parent Guide for lesson 6

### **Diocese of Trenton Representatives contact information to order materials or additional information**

- RCL Sales Representative: Jamie Alexander; 267-994-8049 / [jalexander@rclbenziger.com](mailto:jalexander@rclbenziger.com)
- Loyola Press representative: Matthew DeCaux; 800-256-0589 x228 / [decaux@loyolapress.com](mailto:decaux@loyolapress.com)