



Education Context for Discussion

At its heart Catholic education means teaching the faith to adults, youth and children in a way that brings them into an encounter with Jesus Christ and prepares them to know, love and serve God. Topics for discussion may include reaching out to adult Catholics who do not know the truths and teachings of the Catholic faith; helping families and parents teach their children; the essential relationship between knowing the faith and sharing it with others as part of the new evangelization; Catholic schools and religious education programs that successfully transmit the faith; ensuring that adults and children with special needs have access to excellent programs to learn the faith; support for families who educate their children in the home; updating the way in which the Church teaches, including using new media; building on the diversity of the archdiocese; and engaging a world that is sometimes hostile to the things of God.

Education

Key Elements of the Life of the Church in the Archdiocese of Washington

1. Parish religious instruction programs for adults, families, children, and youth
2. Parish sponsored and supported Catholic elementary schools
3. Archdiocesan and independent Catholic high schools
4. Tuition assistance programs for families with financial need to attend Catholic schools
5. Qualified leadership for parish religious education and adult formation programs
6. Initial and on-going training for catechists
7. Support and resources for parents as the primary religious educators of their children; programs that strengthen marriage and family
8. Vibrant youth ministry programs for adolescents and young adults
9. Readily available baptismal and marriage preparation programs that include parishioner participation
10. RCIA (The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) and sacramental preparation programs for adults and children
11. Catechetical and social programs for parishioners who are deaf or blind, parishioners with physical or intellectual disabilities, along with programs for the homebound and those unable to attend parish events
12. Informal opportunities at parishes for adult learning and spiritual growth (Bible Study, speakers, magazines, books, etc.)
13. Other?

Reflection Questions

1. What are examples of the Church's efforts in this area that are bearing fruit?
2. What are some areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?
3. What practical suggestions do you have?
4. What are the four key elements you identify as priorities?