



ARCHDIOCESE of KINGSTON

6 August 2025

The Solemnity of the Transfiguration of the Lord

Dear Families,

On August 6th, 2023, a letter was circulated in our parishes stating that sacramental preparation of school-aged children was the primary responsibility of the family, with the support and guidance of their local parish. The rationale for this policy is outlined in [Sacrament Preparation of School Aged Children: The Role of Families, Parishes and Catholic Schools](#). Families who have chosen to enroll their children in the provincial Catholic school system can continue to expect their children to receive *religious instruction*, as is proper to the domain of Catholic educational institutions. At the same time, families seeking to prepare their children for the sacraments will do so in the environment of their local parishes, the legitimate place for *catechesis* and *the reception of sacraments*. As stated in the document, this announcement was less an introduction to a *new* policy, and more of a *restoration* of the proper order of lifelong faith formation and participation within the family context.

In the Autumn of 2023, parishes sprang into action to provide sacramental preparation for the school-aged children of our Archdiocese. We are now two years into a catechetical project that has been new territory for many. I want to thank those parishes who answered the call readily, identifying individuals to serve as catechists, developing or adopting programs of instruction and prayer, and warmly welcoming and assisting families. I also want to graciously thank the families who have entrusted the spiritual formation and care of their children to their local parish. You have said yes to God's plan for your family at a time in history when the culture tells you faith is not a priority, or worse, not necessary at all. Presenting your children to receive the sacraments is no small thing, and I am heartened by your pursuit of Jesus.

I am also appreciative of the fact that the implementation of this policy has not always been easy for families or parishes. Many families do not realize they constitute "a domestic church, that is, a community where faith, hope and love are taught and lived by word and example in union with the larger family of the parish church."¹ Placing sacramental preparation in the hands of parents, with the support of the parish, recognizes the spiritual dimension of families and prepares children to be lifelong followers of Jesus. I am sensitive to the reality that it will take time for many parents, along with their pastor and faith community, to grow confident teaching their children how to live the Christian life.

Anticipating growing pains, chancery staff and a catechetical working group of priests have been walking with parish lay people to develop a clear path forward for all our catechetical efforts. We identified the pressing need to bring Jesus to our parish families in a clear and dynamic way. Thus, heeding the call of the Holy Spirit, we have chosen a Kerygmatic approach to our catechesis. This

¹ Archdiocese of Kingston, [Sacrament Preparation of School Aged Children: The Role of Families, Parishes and Catholic Schools](#), August 6, 2023, 2.



ARCHDIOCESE *of* KINGSTON

means that we have centered Christ and his promise of salvation in all our instructional efforts: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (cf. Jn 3:16). In light of the Good News, the sacraments remain personal, transformational invitations to God’s great love and mercy.

Our Archdiocesan catechetical work has primarily been focused on the sacramental preparation of school-aged children thus far, but it will organically grow to include all aspects of catechetical instruction, including infant baptism, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, and marriage preparation. Our intentional focus on lifelong formation for the Christian life is a hopeful and joyful project of renewal. As we draw ever closer to our 200th Anniversary of the Archdiocese of Kingston, it is my great hope and prayer that all our parish communities may hunger “to know Christ and the power of his resurrection” (cf. Phil 3: 10) ever more deeply through the sacraments.

Prayerful best wishes,

+ Michael Mulhall
Archbishop of Kingston