

Archdiocese of Grouard/McLennan
SACRAMENTAL
GUIDELINES
The Initiation of Children



Approved by
The Most Reverend Gerry Pettipas, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Grouard/McLennan



[Updated February 2017]

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES

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1 September 2014

Dear Colleagues in the Ministry of Sacramental Preparation,

A piece of well-worn conventional wisdom reminds us that it takes a whole village to raise a child. It takes a whole community, parish and diocese, to prepare our people, especially youngsters, to receive the sacraments that assure us of Jesus Christ's abiding presence and action in our lives. This is not the labour of a select few; it draws on the efforts, encouragement and prayer of many.

It is with that in mind that this collection of policies and guidelines was put together. These pages are taken directly from the Policy Manual of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. Our Office of Evangelization and Catechesis sought to put in one easy booklet the various practices in the diocese by which we prepare our young people to receive sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

As you use this valuable resource, I want you to be aware that you exercise a vital ministry in the life of the local Church. I know that you come to this in various roles: as pastor, parent, parish administrator, educator or catechist. We all play our part; we are members of a team. So our efforts must be done in unity with one another. While there will always be individual circumstances that we must attend to, my goal is to have a unity of approach across our diocese. We are members of one sheepfold, with one shepherd to guide us.

Please keep in mind that the policies found in this handbook call for the sacraments to be celebrated at specified times in the Archdiocese. The Baptism of a young person beyond about the age of seven is treated very differently in the Church from the baptism of infants. As we have established in this Archdiocese, First Reconciliation takes place in grade 2 (or about age 7), First Communion is in grade 3 (or about age 8), and Confirmation is in grade 6 (or about age 11). In particular

circumstances, a candidate may receive their sacraments at an age other than those prescribed, but this must always be the exception and not become the norm.

The staff in our Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has carefully researched relevant programs and practical resources to assist the child's family, parish and Catholic school community in preparing our youth to receive their sacraments. I call on all of you to familiarize yourself with these resources. Please, resist the temptation to devise your own program or to select another. You may find other resources with suitable additions to the program, but it should not replace what is recommended.

Again, I am grateful to you all for your collaboration in this vital ministry. May God bless our children through your care and good example.

Sincerely in Christ the Redeemer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

+ Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan

POLICY 2.2.0 Sacramental Guidelines – Initiation of Children

Sacramental preparation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is rooted in the following fundamental beliefs:

- a) All sacraments are ecclesial celebrations, i.e. celebrations of the Church.
- b) Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith.
- c) Catholic schools are an integral part of the on-going religious education of children, and provide valuable assistance in the foundational preparation for the sacraments.

The following general principles are to be kept in mind when all sacramental preparation programs are in place in the parishes and Catholic schools of the archdiocese:

1. **The pastor is ultimately responsible** for the proper preparation of our young people for the sacraments. The priest's direct involvement in catechesis is vital for the faith life of our young people. He shares in the triple mandate of the bishop, to sanctify, to teach and to govern.
2. In most if not all circumstances, **the pastor must have a team of trained catechists** to carry out the catechetical programs. These must work as teams. The composition of these teams will necessarily vary from one parish to another. The parish may establish one catechetical team for each sacrament, or the same team may deliver the program for more than one or all of these sacraments.
3. **Catechists must be credible.** They must take seriously the sacraments they are teaching and be role models for their students in their faithful practice.
4. In those communities where there are Catholic schools, **the teachers who are chosen to teach the sacraments** support what is provided by the parish catechetical team. The teachers may be invited to be part of the team.
5. Sacramental preparation needs to engage the whole parish community. Faith requires the community of believers to welcome, support and nurture the faith life of the parents and children involved. **The parish is responsible** (and not the Catholic school) **for the proper registration of candidates** for sacraments. The parish must ensure that valid proof of baptism is provided before the other sacraments are conferred on candidates.
6. In all sacraments, we deal with sacred mysteries. These are not empty rituals, or magical formulas that automatically produce a beneficial effect on the person of the one receiving them. For this reason, **there must be suitable catechesis** which prepares the candidate for the sacrament which they are about to receive. The persons receiving any sacrament must have an appreciation for what they are receiving, consistent with their intellectual and moral and emotional maturity.
7. The process or format for suitable catechesis for each sacrament needs to include the three pillars: the child's family, parish, and the Catholic school community if a child attends there. It should take into consideration the child's abilities and family circumstances. **Parent/family involvement in the preparation is vital for the child's faith development.** The catechetical programs that I endorse in these policies all have a component that encourages parent and family involvement.

8. **In the baptism rite, parents are reminded that they are the first educators of their children in the ways of faith, and that they are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith.** In every way possible, parishes must attempt to give the parents of the children the tools and the confidence they need in order to fulfill their role in their children's continual spiritual formation.
9. While there are recognized age/grade levels at which children are prepared and celebrate a given sacrament, the candidate's **parents and catechists must be sensitive to that candidate's "preparedness" to receive that sacrament.** Any departure from the norm, whether to delay or to advance the reception of the sacrament, shall be held in discussion with the pastor and the parties involved. The child must be ready and willing to receive a sacrament. Any child who expresses his/her own lack of readiness must be free to postpone the reception of a sacrament. A parent or catechist who has the sensitivity to perceive this in a child must also share this discernment with the pastor.
10. All norms laid down for creating a **safe and caring environment for children** are to be followed rigorously. These may be found in the Archdiocesan Policy Manual, section 5.1 and 5.2.

Given these principles which are proper to all the sacraments that a child will receive while in the elementary grades, all parents and priests and catechists should pay close attention to the policies relative to each of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on May 28, 2013

POLICY 2.2.1 Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism

Preparation for the sacrament of Baptism

As with all sacraments, there must be adequate preparation for the sacrament of Baptism. Canon 851, § 2 states that the parents of an infant who is to be baptized and likewise those who are to undertake the office of sponsor are to be properly instructed in the meaning of this Sacrament and the obligations which are attached to it.

Given the long-standing custom in many Native communities of the grandmother requesting to have grandchildren baptized, such a request is to be treated as if coming from the parents.

Place of Baptism

Note that Canon 860, § 1 states that “Outside the case of necessity, baptism is not to be conferred in private homes, unless the local Ordinary has permitted this for a grave cause.” As with other sacraments, the usual setting is the parish church; other settings should be contemplated only with the greatest caution. Baptism may appropriately take place at the Sunday Eucharist so that the entire community may be present, but the choice for such should be offered to the family, and this should not become the regular practice in parishes where there are many baptisms.

One Requirement for Infant Baptism

Canon 868, § 2 states that “there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic Church. If such a hope is altogether lacking, the Baptism is to be put off according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason.” A baptism consequently, may be deferred but never completely refused. In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, if a baptism is deferred, the priest or deacon must notify the Archbishop in writing, giving the reasons why.

In 1980, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued an Instruction on the baptism of infants. Regarding deferral of the Sacrament in cases of “non-practicing” Christian parents, it sets down the following mode of action:

- a) It is essential to bring the parents to a recognition of their responsibilities.
- b) It is also essential to evaluate the sufficiency of the guarantees concerning the Catholic upbringing of the children. These guarantees are given by some member of the family or by the godparents or by the support of the Christian community. (By guarantees, we mean that there is a well-founded hope of a Catholic upbringing)
- c) If conditions are sufficient in the judgement of the pastor, he can proceed with the baptism, because the children are baptized in the faith of the Church.

Preparation of Non-Baptized Children of Catechetical Age

According to Church law, Canon 852 §1, children who have attained the use of reason and are of catechetical age, seven years or older, who desire to celebrate Baptism are prepared through their participation in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), adapted for children. In keeping with this rite, they are to be prepared to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

A suitable preparation program in the parish would ideally involve the children's parents and members of the child's Catholic school (where one is present) and parish community.

Preparation of Non-Baptized Adults

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the norm for the preparation of non-baptized adults, as well as the norm for the preparation for a baptized adult for the Profession of Faith, is the R.C.I.A. (The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). (Cf. Canon 851)

Baptism and Rite

Given the significant number of Eastern Rite Catholics in our Province, attention must be paid to Canon 111:- "A child of parents who belong to the Latin Church is ascribed to it by reception of baptism, or if one or other parent does not belong to the Latin Church, and both parents agree in choosing that the child be baptized in the Latin Church, the child is ascribed to it by reception of baptism. But if the agreement is lacking, the child is ascribed to the Ritual Church to which the father belongs."

In such cases, note should be made in the parish baptismal register.

All other considerations concerning baptism can be found in Chapter 1 of the *Canonical and Pastoral Guide for Parishes*.

Amended by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

Amended by the College of Consultors on 14 January 2015

Amended by the College of Consultors on 20 October 2015

Sent: Saturday, June 01, 2013 10:05 AM

Subject: Sacramental Preparation for Children

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

At the recent meeting of the Council of Priests and College of Consultors, we passed the following policy and guidelines for the preparation of our children for sacraments in general, and for the sacrament of first reconciliation in particular. As you will see, what we envision is the preparation for and celebration of First Reconciliation in grade two, and the preparation for a celebration of First Holy Communion in grade three.

Please bear in mind that it is the law of the Church that children celebrate first Reconciliation before first Communion.

By preparing for these sacraments and celebrating them in different years, I feel that we place a due and needed emphasis on each Sacrament, and that we highlight appropriately the celebration of Reconciliation, which we know has been given too little emphasis in recent decades. It is my hope that between their first Reconciliation and their First Holy Communion, that children will have received the sacrament of Reconciliation at least a couple of more times, most especially just prior to their First Communion.

I enjoin all pastors and catechists to do their utmost to dispel any fears about the Sacrament of Reconciliation for children. While honouring all guidelines relative to safe and secure environments, the “confessional box” is to be avoided in celebrating this sacrament with small children.

This policy is in effect. Please notify me if there are any difficulties in implementing it immediately.

+ Gerard

Most Rev. Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.

Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan

P.O. Box 388

McLennan AB T0H 2L0

Phone 780.324.3002

Cell 780.837.0591

Fax 780.324.3952

POLICY 2.3.1 Catechetical Norms for First Reconciliation

- According to Church law and practice, (Canon 914) the sacrament of Reconciliation must be received before the child receives the Eucharist for the first time. This is normally to be prepared for and celebrated in grade two, or at about age seven.
- The child is to be assured that this sacrament is not fearsome. The concepts of sin and harm to others are easily understood by children, who have an innate sense of justice and harmony.
- It is understood that First Reconciliation is celebrated in the church in an atmosphere that is peaceful and welcoming for children. The celebration of the sacrament should include a communal celebration with individual confession and absolution. This is also an ideal occasion to provide opportunity for parents and family members to celebrate the sacrament at the same time.
- Children in our Catholic schools are to be offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, preferably during the season of Lent. This may happen either at the school or in the parish church.
- Children are to be reminded that as they receive other sacraments in the Church (First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.); the celebration of Reconciliation is integral to their moral and spiritual readiness to receive these.
- The program and text for the preparation for this sacrament in the archdiocese is We Prepare for Reconciliation, published by Novalis (June 30, 2009). Other suggested resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010
Amended by the College of Consultors 16 on February 2011
Amended by the College of Consultors on 11 May 2011
Amended by the College of Consultors on 28 May 2013

POLICY 2.4.1 Catechetical Norms for First Eucharist

- A child's first sharing fully in the Eucharist is normally to be prepared for and celebrated in grade three, or at about age eight.
- As with all adults in Canada, children are free to receive Communion on the tongue or in the hand. Both of these options are to be freely offered to the child.
- There is no restriction in law that prevents children from receiving Communion under both species. This also is the communicant's option. However, careful preparation will prevent children from making faces or otherwise reacting to what for them may be a strong or bitter taste of the bread and/or wine.
- The reception of First Eucharist normally takes place at a regularly scheduled Sunday Mass with the child's family.
- As parents are the primary educators of their child's faith, it is encouraged that the children sit with their families and receive the Eucharist as a family.
- Parents are encouraged to choose attire that the children can wear to the Sunday Eucharist.
- According to canon law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the sacrament of Reconciliation is to be received before the child receives the Eucharist for the first time.
- As they are making their proximate preparation for their First Holy Communion, children are to be offered the opportunity for and strongly encouraged to receive again the sacrament of Reconciliation. This contributes to their moral and spiritual readiness to receive the gift of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. However, they should not be "forced" to do so. The celebration of Reconciliation before First Communion need not be the day prior, but every effort should be made to provide Reconciliation within two months of First Communion.
- Families are asked to be prudent and thoughtful in the ways that they mark the celebration of First Holy Communion for their child. Gifts or other ways of marking the event should be consistent with the spiritual nature of this sacrament and its dignified simplicity.
- The program and text for the preparation for this sacrament in the archdiocese is We Share in the Eucharist, published by Novalis. Additional supplementary resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Accepted and promulgated by the College of Consultors on 29 January 2014

POLICY 2.6.1 Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

The preparation and celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation follow the same guiding principles established in the Archdiocese.

Sacramental preparation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is rooted in the following fundamental beliefs:

- a) All sacraments are ecclesial celebrations, i.e. celebrations of the Church.
- b) Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith. Parent/family involvement in the preparation is vital for the child's faith development.
- c) Catholic schools where they exist are an integral part of the on-going religious education of children, and provide valuable assistance in the foundational preparation for the sacraments.

The sacrament of Confirmation is usually prepared for and celebrated in grade 6 or about age 11.

The Sacrament of Confirmation may take place at any time of the year. However, given the penitential nature of the season of Lent, the celebration of sacraments such as Confirmation is discouraged during that period. When the Archbishop's pastoral visitations transpire in a particular deanery, it is strongly recommended that Confirmation be celebrated during the time of visitation in the parishes of that deanery. All other parishes in the Archdiocese may request a date anytime outside of these dates. Please use the form *Request for the Sacrament of Confirmation to be Celebrated in Your Parish*, which can be found immediately following this policy.

The pastor is ultimately responsible for the proper preparation of the sacrament of Confirmation and his direct involvement in catechesis is vital. The catechetical team, consisting of the pastor and trained catechists from the parish and Catholic School, are all called to work together in a collaborative effort to support the growth of faith in our parents and young people.

There will always be some youth from outside our Catholic schools who will need to be included in catechesis and preparations for the celebration.

The program and text for the preparation of this sacrament in the Archdiocese is *Alive in the Spirit* published by Novalis. Other suggested resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

In planning the liturgy for the Sacrament of Confirmation, every effort is to be made to avoid the feel, the conduct, and the appearance of a "graduation". Confirmation candidates are to be dressed simply and modestly, to keep the focus on Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is not a graduation from a school or program, but the deepening of a relationship with Christ and the willingness to be his disciple.

As the candidates prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, the celebration of Reconciliation is integral to their moral and spiritual readiness.

Please keep in mind the following directives for the liturgical celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation:

- Depending on the capacity of the church, the preferred seating arrangement is a pew for each Confirmation candidate, sponsor and immediate family members.
- When the celebration of Confirmation takes place at a Sunday Mass, the prayers of the Sunday liturgy are to be used, as well as the readings prescribed for that Sunday. If the celebration happens on a weekday, there is greater flexibility for choosing the Mass texts and the readings.
- The liturgical ministers of the ceremony should be chosen as much as possible from among the confirmandi, but only with adequate planning and preparation.
- The rite of anointing takes place in a standing position for both the Archbishop and those receiving Confirmation.
- The music at a Mass of Confirmation is to be good liturgical music, which encourages the active participation of everyone. A suitable question to ask in the selection of music is, “Is this song or piece of music something we would use at any other Sunday Mass?”
- Power point can be used to support the celebration of the liturgy for music and the prayers of the Mass. It cannot be used for extra audio-visual presentations during the liturgy. A very appropriate time to show these is during the reception following the liturgy.
- Following the Mass and the recessional hymn, parents and others are welcome to take group and individual photos with the Archbishop. To keep the focus on the sacrament, only the designated photographer may take pictures during the ceremony and the Mass. This should be made clear before the Confirmation Day and again before the liturgy.

The flow of the Confirmation liturgy is the following:

- **Gospel** (*proclaimed by the pastor or deacon or other priest*)
- **Presentation of the Candidates** (*by the pastor or a catechist; using option A on page 93 of the ritual book Rite of Confirmation, ©CCCB 198*)
- **Homily**
- **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**
- **Laying on of Hands** (*the bishop's hands are extended over the candidates, who are standing*)
- **Anointing with Chrism** (*while sponsors lay their hands on the confirmandi's shoulders*)
- **General Intercessions**

Please contact the Archbishop in advance if you are planning any adaptations to the rite. If you are printing a program, please provide a draft copy before printing multiple copies.

Refer to the archdiocesan handbook, *Sacramental Guidelines: The Initiation of Children*, for further suggestions for preparing the celebration liturgy.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010
 Accepted by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011
 Amended by the College of Consultors on 14 January 2015

POLICY 2.6.2 Eastern Rite Confirmation

In the Ukrainian Catholic Church, confirmation is administered immediately after baptism. Problems arise when Ukrainian Catholic students fail to realize that they have already been confirmed. To obviate difficulties, the following guidelines are to be observed:

1. The certificate of baptism issued by the Ukrainian Catholic parish states explicitly that the person has been, not only baptized, but also confirmed. Thus, **baptism** certificates of potential candidates for confirmation in the Latin Rite are to be personally reviewed by the pastor (and principal in the event of the candidate being a student in a Catholic School) before the candidate is enrolled in the confirmation class. Only in rare cases where a baptismal record cannot be located is it permissible to accept an affidavit.
2. If a Ukrainian Catholic child had been baptized and not confirmed, the matter should be referred to the proper pastor of the child. If this is not possible because no Ukrainian Catholic priest resides or serves in that locality or region, the Ukrainian Catholic chancery should be notified before any steps are taken to enrol a Ukrainian Catholic child in the Latin Rite confirmation class.
3. In cases where a doubt exists as to the rite of a candidate for confirmation in the Latin Rite, the matter should be referred to either Chancery Office.
4. Efforts should be made to explain to children of whatever Rite what the laws and customs of their Rites are concerning confirmation. The proper pastor of each child is to be consulted by the teacher when any difficulty arises.

Reviewed by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

REQUEST FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION TO BE CELEBRATED IN YOUR PARISH

Parish Name and Place _____

Contact Person _____

Telephone _____

Fax Number _____

Email Address _____

Number of Candidates for Confirmation (approximate) _____

Suggested dates and times for the Celebration of Confirmation

Please select four possible dates and times, and list them in order of preference. Try to include two possibilities of dates during the week, and two possibilities of Saturday evening / Sunday.

First choice _____

Second choice _____

Third choice _____

Fourth choice _____

Return by fax to 780 532-9706 or by e-mail to exec.agm@live.ca as soon as you have date options and number of candidates.

Best Practices for Adults Involved in Sacramental Preparation of Children

Handing on the Good News of Jesus Christ to children and youth invites a life-giving response of faith, hope and love from all the adults involved in sacramental preparation. Foundational aspects for the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan include both initial and immediate preparation through best practices.

Best Practices for Families in the Initial Preparation

Faith is best passed on from adult to child through:

- † Participation in the Sunday Eucharist
- † Prayer in the family
- † Example and lived experience of parents and other prime caregivers to their belief in Jesus.
- † Daily living a Catholic way of life appropriate to one's age and spiritual development.
- † Religious instructional support from a Catholic School or home schooling program.



Best Practices for Priests in the Initial and Immediate Preparation

Sharing in the triple mandate of the bishop to sanctify, to teach and to govern, a priest:

- † Calls forth catechists by identifying gifts and skills for catechesis in parishioners.
- † Invites catechists to be part of catechetical teams and collaborate with him in sacramental preparation.
- † Makes sure that catechists and he actively participate in ongoing formation sessions.
- † Meets with parish catechetical and/or school teams in May or June of the preceding school year to plan dates for next year's celebrations of the sacraments.
- † Ensures proper registration of candidates for the sacramental preparation in his parish; provides sufficient time for parents to obtain a valid certificate of Baptism in the Catholic Church before the celebration of First Eucharist and Confirmation.
- † Is directly involved in providing suitable catechesis for parents and children; this includes meetings with parents only and with parents and children together.
- † Seeks out ways of coming to know the families of the children preparing to receive a sacrament. e.g. meeting with a family after Mass or a family inviting the priest to their home.
- † Fosters and welcomes participation in school and classroom faith formation activities throughout the school year, especially those focused on the sacraments.
- † Encourages and supports parents in the faith formation of their child.



Best Practices for Parent Involvement in the Immediate Preparation

Parents fulfill their rights and duties for their children's spiritual formation by:

- † Presenting their child to the faith community at the enrolment ceremony.
- † Learning more about the sacrament their child is receiving.
- † Becoming familiar with the preparation process by attending the parent informational meeting.
- † Taking an active part in the preparation sessions for parents and children.

- † Discussing and completing with their children the assigned pages in the program booklets.



Best Practices for Parish Involvement in the Immediate Preparation

Sacramental preparation needs to engage the whole parish community. The community of believer's best supports and nurtures the faith life of the parents and children by:

- † Inviting participation in sacramental preparation through announcements in parish and school newsletters, bulletins and websites.
- † Welcoming all those who respond when parents present their children to the faith community at the enrolment ceremony at the Sunday Eucharist.
- † Praying for the families as they journey toward the celebration of the sacrament.
- † Providing support to parents in their role as the first educators in the faith life of their children.
- † Inviting families involved in sacramental preparation to take part in the ministries at the Sunday Liturgy. E.g. Greeters, gift bearers, readers, take up the collection, give out bulletins and music ministry.
- † Helping with hospitality aspects at the retreat days, parent meetings and celebrations.



Policy Manual, Section 5.1.2

General Overview

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, we are committed to ensuring that our parishes, ministries and programs are places filled with the peace and joy that come with loving our Lord God and serving one another in charity and humility. Events of the recent past have shown us that a combination of prudent measures to prevent and properly respond to claims of harm will best ensure that no one, and most especially no child, youth or vulnerable adult, is subjected to exploitation, abuse, bullying, or any other form of physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual violence. These prudent measures are what make up our “Safe Environment Policy”.

The principal elements of the Safe Environment Policy are the Code of Conduct and the parish training sessions. We believe that education on and enforcement of these elements will make our faith communities attractive and nurturing places to be for everyone.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan sets out the responsibilities and expectations for clergy, staff and volunteers who serve in the parishes and offices of the Archdiocese.

Everyone to whom it applies must understand it and abide by it, for the good of the Archdiocese, the faithful, and him or herself. The Code of Conduct describes attitudes and behaviours that are considered essential elements of any ministry in the Archdiocese. Before beginning to serve as clergy, staff or a volunteer in a high risk ministry, every candidate must read and sign Form 5.1.b, *Ministry Suitability Form and Covenant of Care*, indicating acceptance of this Code. All other volunteers must read and sign Form 5.1.c, *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement*.

Violations of the Code will be handled pursuant to Policy 5.2.1 *Misconduct Policy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan*.

Creating a Safe Environment

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the principal features of a safe environment include:

- Procedures are in place to ensure that risks of harm to children, adolescents and vulnerable adults, in particular, are minimal and/or inadvertent.
- The physical environment for ministry and activities, especially as it relates to children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults, is designed to eliminate “private spaces” and to enhance visibility of all activities and interactions between individuals.
- Clergy, staff and volunteers are trained to respond immediately and effectively to incidents of harassment, bullying, and other threatening or harmful conduct.
- Confidential processes for reporting misconduct are in place.
- A published Misconduct Policy provides a transparent and accountable procedure for handling allegations of misconduct, exploitation, and abuse.
- Nobody and nothing is excluded from complying with the Code of Conduct and the Misconduct Policy.

Training

All clergy, employees, and high risk ministry volunteers of the Archdiocese and its parishes are required to attend an orientation session on the policies of the Archdiocese, covering the *Code of Conduct*, creating a safe environment, and the *Misconduct Policy* of the Archdiocese. This session will normally be conducted in each deanery, once a year, by the Archdiocesan Coordinator of Responsible Ministry. All clergy, employees and high risk ministry volunteers in parishes of a deanery will be required to attend the session made available in their first year of service, and then at least every three years.

Definitions

- **Abuse:** Regular and/or repeated cruel and violent treatment of a person. It may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. It may or may not be criminal in nature.
- **Bullying:** Unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
- **Exploitation of a ministerial relationship:** Using another person for selfish purposes and/or using a position of authority or trust to gain a personal advantage or benefit.
- **Harassment:** Aggressive pressure or intimidation that may create a hostile or offensive environment for the victim.
- **Ministerial relationship:** A relationship involving trust and confidence that is based primarily upon the ministry offered by a priest or deacon or other minister to another person. Examples of ministry include counselling, spiritual guidance and the celebration of the sacraments.

Responding to Misconduct

- **Responsibilities to report under the laws of Canada and Alberta**

There is no positive duty under the Criminal Code of Canada to report criminal acts, e.g. assaults (harassment, bullying, physical and sexual assault) or theft, to police or other authority.

Under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* of Alberta anyone who witnesses or suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected by a parent or guardian is obliged to report that information to a caseworker at the local Child and Family Services offices.

- **Duty to report misconduct under the policies of the Archdiocese of Groaurd-McLennan**

The organizational nature of the Archdiocese means that the parish priest will most often be the person who receives the initial report of a violation of the Code of Conduct.

It is widely understood that the physical or sexual abuse of a child, youth or vulnerable adult requires immediate involvement of, and investigation by, the police, other government services, and the Misconduct Policy Administrator of the Archdiocese.

However, other violations of the Code of Conduct may be more difficult to identify and respond to. People, especially volunteers, may find themselves questioning whether what they have witnessed or been told about warrants the intrusion of an investigation. We ask all our clergy, employees and volunteers to resist making this decision on their own. Please tell your parish priest, the Misconduct Policy Administrator, an officer of the Chancery, or the Archbishop about any behavior by a clergyman, employee or volunteer which appears to be a violation of the Code of Conduct. By discussing it, those involved should be able to clarify the need for any further steps to be taken. It will also allow for a record of the incident or incidents to be made. Do **not** ignore any situation that gives you pause.

All members of clergy and all employees of the Archdiocese and its parishes have a positive duty to report **immediately** any claims of incidents of misconduct by clergy, employees and/or volunteers. These may be incidents they personally witnessed, incidents they have been told about, and incidents of which they become aware and have a well-founded reason to believe occurred. The report may be made to a supervisor or to the Misconduct Policy Administrator (see Policy 5.2.1 Misconduct Policy).

Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Scope

The *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* applies to all members of the clergy, all paid employees of the Archdiocese and its parishes, and all volunteers in ministries of the Archdiocese and its parishes.

Our Values

As a local faith community of the Catholic Church, the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan upholds and promotes the values expressed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings and laws of the Catholic Church. These include, but are not limited to:

- Serving others in love, humility and sacrifice
- Respecting the dignity and well-being of every person
- Acting in justice and charity in every situation and relationship

Our Code

The principal elements of the *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* are: Accountability, Confidentiality, Respectful Attitudes, and Protection of Vulnerable People.

• **Accountability**

- Adhere to the published policies of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan and, if applicable, the parish where you serve.
- Comply with the elements of orientation and training provided to you for carrying out your ministry.
- Act always with integrity and take responsibility for your actions and words.
- Respect the hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.
- Follow the chain of reporting for your position.
- Do not exceed the authority of your position.

• **Confidentiality**

- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of any personal information you gain through your position.
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information related to the business and operation decisions of the parish and/or the Archdiocese gained through your position.

• **Respectful Attitudes and Behaviours**

- Abuse of any kind is strictly prohibited.
- Harassment of any kind, including personal (physical and verbal), sexual, and cyber, is strictly prohibited.
 - Personal harassment means any kind of discriminatory conduct, whether physical or verbal, directed at an individual and causes that individual substantial distress.
 - Sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature directed at an individual and is unwanted and/or unwelcome.
 - Cyber harassment is using technological means of communication to direct sexual or discriminatory words, gestures, or images at an individual that causes that individual substantial distress.
- Bullying of any kind, including verbal, physical and cyber, is strictly prohibited. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
 - Verbal bullying is the use of words and language to intimidate an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
 - Physical bullying is the use of physical force or coercion against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
 - Cyber bullying is the use of technological means of communication in a threatening or an exploitative way against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
- Mishandling and/or misappropriation of temporal goods (i.e. money and property) of the Church is strictly prohibited.

• **Protection of Vulnerable People**

- **One-on-one meetings (e.g. counselling, reconciliation, education activities, home visits)**
 - **Children and adolescents**

It is prohibited for one, unrelated, adult to be alone with a child or an adolescent when serving in or at an activity of a parish or the Archdiocese. There must always be two, unrelated adults present for any ministry to a single child or adolescent.
 - **Vulnerable adults**

It is recommended that there always be two adults, preferably unrelated, present for any ministry that involves a single, vulnerable adult.
- **If ministry requires one-on-one for effectiveness or confidentiality reasons**

If it is essential to serve a child, adolescent, or vulnerable adult one-on-one, then it must be done in a location that is entirely visible to other people. For example, in an open space but off to one corner; in a room with glass doors and/or window; if for the purposes of confession, a traditional confessional may be used, as long as the priest and penitent are entirely separated by a physical barrier.
- **Group activities and events**

- **Children and adolescents**

In activities that involve groups of children and/or adolescents, there should always be two adults present, preferably unrelated, to offer instruction or supervision. These two adults must always be visible to one another during the activity or event. See **Section 8** of the *Policy Manual for Codes of Conduct* that are specific to youth activities and events.

- **Vulnerable adults**

In ministry activities involving groups of vulnerable adults, there should be two adults present, preferably unrelated.

- **Sacramental Preparation**

The preparation of children for the celebration of the Sacraments of first Reconciliation, first Communion, and Confirmation is to be done in a group format, with at least two unrelated adults present. One-on-one instruction for children and adolescents is never permitted. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Liturgy of the Word with Children (“Sunday School”)**

The Liturgy of the Word with Children during Sunday Mass is always to be conducted by at least two adults. It is preferred that the adults be unrelated to each other, but that may not always be possible in smaller communities. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Other catechetical and recreational programs for children and adolescents**

Two unrelated adults are to be present for all recreational and catechetical programs.

*Specifically for Clergy
<p>The indefensible conduct of clergy across Canada and around the world that has been made public in recent decades makes it imperative that the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan spells out the prohibited behaviours for its priests and deacons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sacrament of Reconciliation<p>The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is always to be done in (a) a room which is open to the view of others, through a window or glass-paneled door; or, (b) in a traditional confessional where the priest and penitent are completely separated by a physical barrier.</p><p>The location of Reconciliation rooms and confessionals is to be in a high traffic area of the church building. Any new construction or renovation of Reconciliation rooms is to provide for clear glass openings, either as windows or in doors.</p>○ Prohibition on guests in living quarters<p>Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to use his living space, whether attached to or separate from the parish office or church, to host a child, adolescent or vulnerable adult, whether individually or in groups.</p>○ Prohibition on travelling

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to travel with a child, children, an adolescent or adolescents or a vulnerable adult or adults, without the parent or legal guardian present.

- **Prohibition on gifts**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to give expensive gifts to or accept expensive gifts from children, adolescents or vulnerable adults.

- **Displays of affection**

Priests and deacons are strongly discouraged from engaging in physical displays of affection with children, adolescents and vulnerable adults.

Approved and promulgated by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

POLICY 2.1.3 School Mass Guidelines

The Archbishop strongly encourages the priests of the Archdiocese to be active and present in the schools in their parishes. One important element of that presence is the Mass celebrated for, by and, as applicable, in those schools.

Proper reverence: Whether the Mass takes place in the church or a suitable room in the school, proper church etiquette should be observed. It is recommended that, in advance of the first school Mass of the year, the student body be reminded of the following points:

- a. Respect for sacred space (the body of the church) is expressed first of all by silence. If it is necessary to speak to someone, this should be done in a whisper, so as not to disturb others in the church.
- b. Running is not proper in the church.
- c. Chewing gum, and any food stuff in the mouth, should be disposed of before entering the church.
- d. Caps and hats are not worn in the church.
- e. All in attendance should have fasted for at least one hour before communion.
- f. There should be no eating or drinking in the church, except of course for communion.
- g. At the entrance to the church, there are holy water stoups. One is to use the holy water in making the sign of the cross on entering the church.
- h. As one enters the pew, a genuflection is made towards the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.
- i. Posture when in the pew should be respectful of the place.
- j. Cell phones are to be turned off prior to the commencement of the Mass.

The parish priest and the responsible staff member(s) of the Catholic school should always consult on the scheduling of school Masses. This may be done at the beginning of the school year, with Mass dates for specific seasons, feasts and events added to the school calendar. Or Masses may be scheduled as the Church and school calendars unfold, requiring only sufficient notice for the priest celebrant and the school. From time to time, a Mass may be planned in response to an unforeseen or unexpected event.

Priests should encourage schools to use the School Mass Planning Guide that accompanies this policy when preparing for a Mass. The plan should be submitted to the priest for his approval. This will ensure that the Mass is organized and celebrated following the appropriate Church norms and with due reverence to the Lord.

Using the School Mass Planning Guide

1. Time and Place

Mass Location: It is preferable that the Mass take place in the parish church. However, recognizing that this will not always be feasible, it is also permitted for the Mass to take place in a suitable place in the school itself.

Feast: School Masses can be planned to recognize liturgical seasons (e.g. Advent, Lent), specific feast days, solemnities and memorials (e.g. Christmas, memorial of the school's patron saint).

Theme: School Masses might also be planned for reasons directly connected to the school's students or the community (e.g. graduation, beginning or ending of school year.)

NOTE: The Church celebrates Ash Wednesday, Easter, and Christmas Mass only on, and never in anticipation of, these special days. The Church does not celebrate Mass more than once on Holy Thursday.

2. People Involved

Planners: The planners of the school Mass should, as much as possible, be students of the school, directed by the **Staff advisor**.

Presider: The presider, also known as the celebrant, will usually be the parish priest. The presider may be another priest. If the priest is invited by the school, the planners should get the permission of the parish priest. If an absence of the parish priest is the reason for another priest celebrant, then the parish priest should ensure the planners know of this as far ahead of the planned Mass as possible.

Servers: Servers should be selected from among those who are already trained as servers in the parish.

Music ministers: The people who play the accompanying instruments and lead the singing at Mass should be listed here.

Commentator: This is the person/people who introduce the Mass and, usually, read the General Intercessions following the homily.

Lectors (readers): Whenever possible, there should be different people to read the first and second readings of the Mass, as well as the responsorial psalm, if it is not sung. (The Gospel is read by the presider.)

Cantor(s): The cantor is the person who sings the responsorial psalm and the Gospel acclamation.

Presenters of the Gifts: The Gifts are the hosts and wine which are consecrated by the presider during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Eucharistic ministers: Eucharistic ministers must be selected from those who have been properly trained and commissioned as Eucharistic Ministers by the parish. These may be chosen from among teachers or other adults present for the Mass.

NOTE: Students engaged in any of the above ministries in the Mass are to be well prepared for their ministry, either by the planners or the parish priest. Planners are encouraged not to have children from the lower elementary grades as lectors and should choose students from the higher grades or, if necessary, adults for this ministry at Mass.

3. Liturgy

All liturgical norms are to be respected. When there is doubt about a norm or practice, teachers or those planning the liturgy are advised to consult the priest who is presiding at the Mass.

Gathering Rite: Before the entrance procession, the commentator may read an **introduction** to the Mass. The writer of the introduction should address the feast or theme that is being celebrated and

welcome any particular guests at the Mass. If symbols for the Mass theme are being used, they are to be brought forward at this time, **before** the entrance procession.

The planners should indicate which Opening Rite is to be used by the presider and whether the “Lord, have mercy” will or will not be sung. When included in the liturgy, the “Glory to God” should be sung, not recited. A “Mass setting” for all sung parts may be selected from the parish hymnal or other Church resource and should be identified in the School Mass Plan.

Liturgy of the Word: Readings for the Mass must be from the Bible and be selected in consultation with the parish priest. The selections should be listed in the School Mass Plan for the readings, the Gospel acclamation, and the Gospel. The readings must follow one of the two patterns prescribed for Liturgy of the Word:

<p><u>Option 1</u> Old Testament Reading Responsorial Psalm New Testament Reading Gospel Acclamation Gospel (proclaimed by a priest or deacon)</p>	<p><u>Option 2</u> Old Testament or New Testament Reading Responsorial Psalm Gospel Acclamation Gospel (proclaimed by a priest or deacon)</p>
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Music: Music selections must be of a suitable liturgical nature. If you cannot find it in a Catholic hymn book, check with the presider before deciding on it. Recorded music (from a tape, CD, digital recording or internet resource) is discouraged. Hymns should come from parish musical resources or otherwise meet the requirements of copyright law in Canada. Non-liturgical music is not to be used during the Mass. Please refer to the school administration or the parish priest for information if there are any questions.

In the School Mass Plan, the hymn names should be listed and the hymn numbers or hymnal, if available. The Mass setting should be indicated for the sung Mass parts.

Mass for Graduates

In addition to the above guidelines and requirements, the following recommendations will assure due reverence is shown during the Mass for high school graduates.

Mass for Graduates

1. The Mass for graduates is to be clearly distinct from other graduation events (convocation, prom, etc.) A distinct day for the Mass would help to highlight its unique significance.
2. It is preferred that the Mass for graduates ~~should~~ take place in a Catholic church. However, if this venue poses a difficulty, the parish priest and the principal of the school may jointly decide on another appropriate building or site.
3. The priest celebrant of the Mass should be the pastor within whose parish boundaries the school is located. Permission to ask a priest other than the parish priest to be the priest celebrant is to be obtained from the parish priest himself. All other priests serving within the school's boundaries should be invited to concelebrate.
4. All provisions for preparation and proper reverence at Masses for school communities in general are to be observed, above.
5. The procession of the graduates is to occur prior to the beginning of the Mass. It must not form part of the entrance procession of the Mass. The procession of graduates may be accompanied by sacred or other appropriate music.
6. Graduate attire must be appropriate for Mass, whether graduate gowns are worn or not. If graduates wear their graduation gowns, their graduation hats are not to be worn at all during the Mass.
7. If the Mass for graduates is scheduled on a Sunday or a Solemnity, the Scripture readings for the Sunday or Solemnity must be used. Otherwise, appropriate readings chosen to fit the graduation theme may be selected. All selected Scripture readings must be approved by the priest celebrant.
8. Hymns should come from parish musical resources or meet the requirements of copyright law in Canada. Non-liturgical music is not to be used during the Mass.
9. Symbols related to the theme of graduation are not to be used in the Mass but are best displayed in one of the other components of the graduation.
10. If the Mass and graduation ceremonies must occur on the same day and in the same venue, the celebration of Mass will precede the graduation ceremonies.
A break is to be scheduled following the Mass, after the Recessional and after the priest celebrant has withdrawn from the sanctuary, and before the graduation ceremonies begin.
11. The altar is a sacred furnishing within the sanctuary of the church and needs to be treated with reverence. If diplomas are to be handed out in a ceremony at the church, there must be a separate table on which to place the diplomas for distribution.

Messe pour les diplômés

1. La messe pour les diplômés doit être clairement distincts des autres événements à la fin des études (convocation, bal, etc.) Un jour distinct pour la messe contribuerait à ressortir sa signification unique.
2. Il est préférable que la messe pour les diplômés ait lieu dans une église catholique. Toutefois, si ce lieu pose une difficulté, le curé et le directeur de l'école peuvent décider conjointement sur un autre bâtiment ou d'un site approprié.
3. Le prêtre célébrant de la messe devrait être le pasteur de la paroisse dans laquelle se trouve l'école. L'autorisation de demander à un prêtre autre que le pasteur de présider cette messe doit être obtenue du pasteur lui-même. Tous les autres prêtres qui servent dans les limites de l'école devraient être invités à concélébrer.
4. Toutes les dispositions pour la préparation et la vénération appropriée à une messe pour les communautés scolaires en général doivent être respectées. Voir la politique 2.1.3. Cela inclut des questions telles que la langue bruyante et inappropriée, la gomme à mâcher, et de l'alcool ou de drogue juste avant la célébration.
5. La procession des diplômés doit se faire avant le début de la messe. Il ne doit pas faire partie de la procession d'entrée de la messe. Le cortège des diplômés peut être accompagné par la musique sacrée ou un autre genre de musique appropriée.
6. Les vêtements portés par les diplômés doit être approprié pour la messe. Si les diplômés portent leurs robes de graduation, leurs chapeaux de diplômés ne sont pas portés du tout pour la messe.
7. Si la messe pour les diplômés est prévue sur un dimanche ou un Solennité, les lectures bibliques pour le dimanche ou Solennité doivent être utilisés. Dans le cas contraire, des lectures appropriées choisies pour correspondre au thème de la graduation peuvent être choisies. Toutes les lectures bibliques choisies doivent être approuvées par le prêtre célébrant.
8. Les hymnes devraient provenir des ressources musicales paroissiales. Musique non liturgique ne doit pas être utilisé pendant la messe.
9. Symboles liés au thème de l'obtention du diplôme ne sont pas utilisés à l'intérieur de la messe, mais sont mieux affichées dans le contexte des autres composants de l'obtention du diplôme.
10. Si la messe et les cérémonies de diplomation doivent avoir lieu le même jour et dans le même lieu, la célébration de la messe précédera les cérémonies de graduation.

Une pause de quelques minutes doit être prévue après la messe, après la Récession et après que le prêtre célébrant ait retiré du sanctuaire et avant que commencent les cérémonies de remise des diplômes.
11. L'autel est un mobilier sacré dans le sanctuaire de l'Église et doit être traité avec respect. Si les diplômés doivent être remis lors d'une cérémonie à l'église, il doit y avoir une table séparée sur laquelle sont placés les diplômes pour la distribution.

Accepted by the College of Consultors on 11 February 2010

Amended by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011

Amended by the Curia on 26 May 2016

Amended by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

SCHOOL MASS PLANNING GUIDE

Time and Place			
School			
Mass Location			
Date		Time	
Feast			
Theme			
People involved			
Planners			
Staff advisor			
Presider			
Servers			
Music ministers			
Commentator			
Lectors (Readers)	First Reading		
	Second Reading		
	Gospel		
	General Intercessions		
Cantor(s)	Responsorial Psalm		
	Gospel Acclamation		
Presenters of the Gifts			
Eucharistic ministers	Hosts		
	1.	2.	
	3.	4.	
	Wine (optional)		
	1.	2.	
	3.	4.	
Liturgy			
Gathering Rite			
<i>The tone of the celebration is set from the very beginning. The commentator should ensure that the microphone is turned on before beginning. The</i>		Introduction of theme and welcome of guests before Mass Written by:	
		Entrance Song (Title, Hymnal, Hymn number, etc.)	

