

catechism update

Spring 2003

Revisions to the *National Adult Catechism* Now Underway

The members of the Editorial Oversight Board for the *National Adult Catechism* met in Washington D.C. January 27 through 29 in order to review the results of the consultation on the first draft of the *National Adult Catechism*. It was quickly apparent to members of the Editorial Oversight Board that the overriding majority of respondents approved the general structure, content and presentation of the *National Adult Catechism*. This means, then, that the format of the text will remain basically unchanged.

As a result of reviewing both general comments and individual suggestions, the members of the Editorial Oversight Board made some overarching decisions about the new draft. Instruction to the draft writer included the following directives:

- Additional doctrinal content is to be added to the text. This should take place in two ways. First, there are to be more references to the *Catechism*. Second, each chapter is to contain a doctrinal summary of the points covered in that chapter.
- Stories about living people and quotes from living authors are to be eliminated. There is one exception-quotes from Pope John Paul II will be maintained.
- A few of the introductory stories are to be replaced. All the stories are to be reviewed and rewritten, if necessary, to make clear the connection between the story and the chapter contents.
- Attempts are to be made to include more Scripture in whatever ways are possible.
- The text is to be edited in order to reflect more horizontally inclusive language. Language used in reference to God will not be changed.

Most Rev. Alfred Hughes
Chairman

Most Rev. William Levada
Most Rev. Robert Banks
Most Rev. Donald Wuerl
Most Rev. Daniel DiNardo
Most Rev. Leonard Blair

Consultants:
Most Rev. Daniel Buechlein, OSB
Rev. John Pollard



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- More terms are to be defined both within the text itself as well as in the glossary.
- The sections which focus on the application of doctrine to culture are to be reviewed and rewritten, if necessary, so that they present a more balanced view of the lights and shadows of US culture.

The Editorial Oversight Board also considered a substantial number of the individual suggestions that had been received. Not all the individual suggestions had been processed by the time of the Editorial Board meeting, so the bishops on the board directed the draft writer to review the rest of the suggestions as they become available. Since the draft writer already had the experience of reviewing the individual suggestions with the bishops on the Board, they directed him to make judgments based on decisions the Board had made about similar suggestions. Any suggestions requiring a discussion by the Board are to be directed to the chair of the Editorial Board who will consult with other members if necessary.

The Editorial Oversight Board also made some adjustments to the time line for the *National Adult Catechism*. They anticipate that a new draft will be completed by May. The revised draft will then be sent out to all the US bishops for a consultation from June through mid September. Since the first consultation was so positive, this second consultation is envisioned as part of the final refinement or amendment process in preparing the new draft of the *National Adult Catechism* for approval by the body of bishops. In September, the Catechism Committee plans to present the draft to the Administrative Committee requesting a vote of approval at the November, 2003 General Assembly.

NEW MEMBER OF THE CATECHISM COMMITTEE

Archbishop Buechlein's resignation as chair of the Catechism Committee left a vacancy in the membership of the Committee. That vacancy was filled in late December when Bishop Wilton Gregory, as President of the Conference, appointed Bishop Leonard P. Blair a member of the Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism. Bishop

Blair is an auxiliary bishop in Detroit. He is already very familiar with the conformity review work of the Committee, having served on a number of occasions as the chair of a conformity review team. A complete listing of the current membership of the Catechism Committee appears on the front page of each issue of *Catechism Update*.