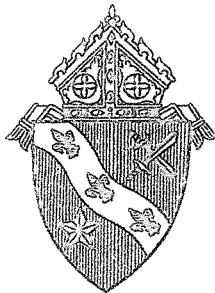


# Diocese of Dallas



OFFICE OF THE VICAR GENERAL/  
MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

June 15, 2015

Reverend Albert Becher  
Holy Family of Nazareth Catholic Church  
2323 Cheyenne Street  
Irving, TX 75062

Dear Father Becher,

I have reviewed your request for clarification concerning sacramental preparations for children in your parish who are attending alternative schools or are home schooled. It is the serious duty of the pastor to see to the proper catechesis and preparations for children receiving the sacraments in his parish. This is especially true of the sacraments of Baptism, First Eucharist, First Penance and Confirmation. This usually takes the form of preparation in the religion classes of the parish school or the religious education program in the parish. In this way, the pastor, working with the parents, can better be assured of proper preparation of children for the reception of the sacraments.

In these two venues, the pastor is able assure proper catechesis to both children and parents according to the mind of the Church. He is also able to practice with the children to assure proper reception of the sacraments. Another important benefit of parish based sacramental preparation programs is that such programs integrate children and their celebration of the sacraments in the community of the parish. The Catholic faith and its encounter with the living Christ in the sacraments is a communal activity.

Home School Associations, St. Faustina Academy and the Montessori school are not part of the Diocesan School system, not governed by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools nor the Diocesan Bishop. For these reasons, parents who choose to home school their children or attend schools other than the parish school, including public school children, should attend the religious education program of the parish or be in the parish school for sacramental preparation. They certainly can and should reinforce what is taught in the parish school or religious education program. But, for reasons stated above, they should receive sacramental preparation in the parish school or religious education program.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. Douglas Deshotel".

Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, D.D.  
Auxiliary Bishop