

March 25, 2014

RE: *Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation*

Is *Chosen* on the USCCB's list of approved catechetical programs?

Dear Religious Educator,

We have received inquiries regarding our popular sacramental preparation program *Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation*, as to whether this program has been submitted to the USCCB for catechetical review. The USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the *Catechism* has a review and approval process regarding certain catechetical curricula.

Summary

Chosen was developed and designed as a sacramental preparation program using a methodology that incorporates videos, written texts, and classroom experience to communicate the faith to teens in a dynamic and life-changing way. Much of *Chosen's* doctrinal content is delivered through powerful video presentations.

As you may know, the USCCB only reviews printed material. This means that programs such as *Chosen* are simply not eligible, regardless of how complete they are in content or effective they are in delivery. As USCCB policy states, "A conformity review is not applicable to ... digital media, including videos. Individual bishops and their diocesan offices typically monitor and approve such catechetical materials for use in schools and parish catechetical programs."¹

In a recent letter, the USCCB made clear that not all catechetical materials are subject to review and that this should not reflect negatively on those programs that are not eligible: "It is important to note ... that not all catechetical texts and materials are subject to a conformity review. The fact that a given item does not appear on the Subcommittee's 'Conformity List' does not necessarily mean that it has been reviewed and found to be deficient, or that the publisher has failed to submit it."²

Background Information

In developing the *Chosen* program, Ascension Press has made every effort to ensure that the essential catechesis is covered in a way that will resonate with teens and that all of the program materials are in complete conformity with the teachings of the Church and the guidelines of the USCCB.

¹ "The Conformity of Catechetical Materials with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Criteria and Applicability," USCCB Subcommittee on the *Catechism* letter of Sept. 26, 2013.

² Ibid.

Has *Chosen* been granted the *Imprimatur*?

Yes. *Chosen* has been granted the *Imprimatur* by the Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia.

According to our discussions with the USCCB, any catechetical program that holds an *Imprimatur* may be approved by a local ordinary for use by parishes within his diocese. I have included with this letter a partial list of the many endorsements the *Chosen* program has received from bishops and religious educators throughout the country.

Thank you for your time. If you have additional questions regarding this or any other aspect of the *Chosen* program, please contact Lynn Klika at LKlika@AscensionPress.com or by calling 1-800-376-0520, ext. 221.

Sincerely,



Matthew Pinto
President
Ascension Press



Endorsements for *Chosen*

“Teens who experience *Chosen* will find themselves drawn deeply into the beauty of Catholicism and the love of Jesus Christ. In a world searching for meaning, *Chosen* speaks to the hearts and minds of our youth through comprehensive materials and engaging videos taught by an impressive array of presenters. This is a new level of catechesis that uses modern methods to transmit eternal truths. I’m grateful to Chris Stefanick, Ron Bolster, and the entire team at Ascension Press for creating this program.”

- Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia

“*Chosen* speaks to youth in their language, from their culture, and with the enduring love of Jesus Christ. *Chosen* is a thoroughly Catholic confirmation program from the heart of the New Evangelization. Chris Stefanick and his collaborators have combined experience, wisdom, and the best tools of contemporary media to develop a compelling and comprehensive catechesis that strives to form lifelong disciples for Jesus Christ.”

- Most Reverend James D. Conley, Bishop of Lincoln

“*Chosen* is attention-getting, attention-holding, and attention-deepening. The superbly produced videos grab the viewer’s attention with a well-paced mixture of attractive images and music that enhance the story they help to tell. The distinctive personalities of the presenters hold the viewer’s attention with their enthusiasm for topics they obviously know and love. What they teach deepens attention because its content is substantial, thought-provoking, and explicitly well-grounded in the *Catechism*. The texts for students, sponsors, and parents echo the images and themes of the videos, which in turn reinforce the reading material with brief weekly reviews.

Chosen exemplifies Catholic diversity-in-unity. The widely differing life experiences of a host of talented presenters—men and women, priests and laity—offer converging, convincing testimony to the Truth of the Way and the Life they have found in Christ’s Church. This program engagingly invites young people to follow their example. I do not doubt it will help many make the choice to do so.”

- Most Reverend Liam Cary, Bishop of Baker

“I find *Chosen* to be a well-organized, informative, and inspirational Confirmation program. The materials are comprehensive, engaging, and very practical. Furthermore, the catechesis on the videos is presented an interesting and relatable fashion. The materials for parents and sponsors are engaging as well. I believe this program would be very useful for parishes in our diocese.”

- Most Reverend Michael Baker, Bishop of Oakland

“*Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation* is an excellent program that will assist in the formation of Confirmation candidates, sponsors, and parents. This comprehensive study will undoubtedly strengthen Confirmation preparation through its commitment to strong catechesis and handing on the Gospel message of salvation. It is apparent that the *Chosen* presenters have a strong desire for holiness and virtue, and their examples will have a profound impact on all who participate in the program.

I, unreservedly, recommend the *Chosen* program to all the faithful preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is my hope that the parishes and schools in the Diocese of Sioux City will take advantage of this valuable study of catechesis and evangelization.”

- *Most Reverend Walker Nickless, Bishop of Sioux City*

“Ascension Press has diagnosed the pitfalls of the current Confirmation preparation crisis and has provided the perfect antidote in *Chosen*. With its strong emphasis on conversion and proclamation of the Gospel combined with exquisite videos and parent and sponsor resources, *Chosen* exemplifies how the New Evangelization should be embodied in the area of sacramental preparation.”

- *Jon Schaffhausen, Director, Office of Youth Ministry, Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph*

“This program is unlike any other program I have come in contact with, in the way that it touches on the daily life and experiences of the kids in a very real and honest way. It challenges the youth to a life of sainthood and holiness. I highly recommend *Chosen* to anyone responsible for the sacramental preparation and formation of youth. It allows sponsors and parents to accompany the Confirmation candidate, which is a key component for any young person striving to live the Christian life.”

- *Sister Florencia Silva, Director of Youth Ministry, Diocese of Bridgeport*

“While there are many programs and catechetical tools that offer video to “teach” the material, *Chosen* is different in that it uses short, high quality, and VERY high production videos to present the faith in a way that engages those who are used to having the attention span of 140 characters. This goes way beyond a Confirmation program, though...By carrying out the entire program the way it is clearly spelled out in the included Leader Guide, it is frankly impossible for a parish community NOT to be engaged energized, and evangelized with the help of *Chosen*. Ascension Press has simply revolutionized the way we do Confirmation for adolescents. Whatever any parish is doing for their Confirmation program, *Chosen* ought to be a very significant part of it.”

- *Anthony Keiser, Director of Youth Ministry, Diocese of Tulsa*