

CURRICULUM EVALUATION

KEY QUESTIONS

1. GENERAL GOAL

Consider the curriculum materials alongside the foundation documents. Is there a general goal for religious education that is made explicit throughout?

2. CONTENT.

What is the nature of the subject matter treated in this curriculum? For example, persons evaluating Christian curriculum might consider these elements:

- a. **Jesus Christ.** What position informs the treatment of the person and work of Jesus Christ?
- b. **Bible.** How is the Bible viewed as to its nature and purpose, its inspiration, its normative role?
- c. **Church.** What is the view of the church itself? How is it defined? What is its importance to the individual? to society?
- d. **Sacraments.** Does the curriculum take sacramental life sufficiently into account? Are sacraments treated in language suitable for our own church's understanding and belief? If no to either question, what adaptations need to be made?
- e. **Christian Life.** What is the view of a Christian's life and faith? What sets Christians apart from others? In what ways?
- f. **Contemporary Issues.** What are regarded as critical social issues? How are these treated: as essential for study? optional? How forthrightly are the issues examined?
- g. **Themes.** How is the subject matter organized? What cycles are employed? On what kind of calendar?

NOTE: Persons charged with evaluating curriculum published by other faith communities may need to formulate their own lists of content questions.

3. LEARNING THEORY/METHODOLOGY.

What views of teaching and learning permeate the materials? How are these views made obvious to the reader/user?

- a. **Definition of Learning.** Is the act of learning defined? How? Do the materials opt for one view? alternative views?
- b. **Learners.** How are learners' abilities, interests, and developmental characteristics taken into account? What is expected of learners?
- c. **Teacher roles.** How is the act of teaching treated? Is provision made for team teaching? Why or why not? How much specific guidance (e.g., lesson plans) is provided for the individual teacher?
- d. **Teacher preparation/training.** What provision is assumed with respect to teacher training? Do the materials suggest ideas for teachers' meetings, evaluation, and the like?
- e. **Session/lesson plans.** How specifically are session plans developed? Are suggestions given for pre-session activity? Are patterns flexible? determined by content? pre-determined by a fixed order of activity?
- f. **Grading/levels.** What patterns of grouping are employed? For what reasons? Is there flexibility for use in either closely-graded or broadly-graded situations?
- g. **Home/family.** What provision is made for church-home cooperation? Are suggestions given for parents? others?

4. FORMAT.

In what format are the materials published?

- a. **General plan.** Are the materials issued quarterly? or in another pattern? Are the materials available earlier enough for preparation and training to be planned? Are they dated or undated? Are they arranged in units?
- b. **Teacher/learner materials.** Which materials are for teachers? Which ones are for students? Are the materials attractively formatted and appealing to users?
- c. **Cost.** How are the materials priced? What is the expense per pupil? for the total program? A useful comparative figure is to calculate the cost for a class of one teacher and 10 learners.