

The Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano



By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See

Bishop of Bridgeport

**DECREE FOR CERTAIN NORMS
FOR OCIA CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES**

In virtue of my office of Diocesan Bishop, I, the Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, duly concerned with the spiritual welfare of the souls entrusted to me (c. 383 §1), having prayerfully considered the following:

Whereas, there is a need for adjusting certain norms for the sacramental preparation for different age groups, and;

Whereas, I consider that this is an opportune moment to adjust these norms,

ESTABLISH THAT

1. Any catechumen (one in need of all three sacraments of initiation) over the age of reason and 17 years of age or younger must attend at least 24 months of continuous catechetical formation before he or she can be presented for the Easter sacraments at the Easter Vigil. Given the unique needs of this population (and its diverse ages), the form that this formation will take will be tailored by each parish to meet the needs of its catechumens.
2. Any candidate (one in need of Penance, First Communion, and Confirmation) over the age of reason and 17 years of age or younger will receive formation in their parish with two options from which to choose:

Option #1: The candidate will enroll in the same parish formation program offered to young people of similar age, with a minimum of two years of continuous formation. When the candidate has completed the required two years of proximate preparation, he or she will receive immediate preparation for the sacraments that one is missing and then will receive the remaining sacraments of initiation with his or her peers.

Option #2: A pastor may also choose to keep an older candidate in the same formation experience as described in #1 above for a catechumen. If so, the same minimum time requirement applies.

I order that the provisions of this decree have firm and stable effect, notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even if worthy of special mention, and that they be promulgated by inclusion in the official diocesan newspaper, The Fairfield County Catholic, entering into force on October 1, 2026.