

Basic Guidelines for Curriculum for Early Childhood through Grade Eight

These are a basic outline and are not all inclusive.

They can be adapted according to the needs of the parish.

When combining grades, be sure that the basic concepts are included by rotating the grade concepts covered.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Catechesis leads the children to know God as loving and caring, to appreciate themselves and others as unique and special. It provides an environment for growth in faith which enables children to develop a sense of belonging to the Christian community.

Catechesis deepens the child's sense of wonder, awe and thanksgiving for God's creations. It develops the capacity for spontaneous prayer and prayerful silence and introduces children to attitudes and elements of celebration.

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Key Themes and Concepts

God is With Us

1. God Is with Us Now
2. God Is with Us at Play
3. God Is with Us at Home
4. God Is with Us in Our Neighborhood
5. God is with Us as We Grow
6. God Is with Us as We Celebrate Special Days

Prayers to Be Learned

No formal prayers at this time.

Sign of the Cross (optional)

Children are to be led to understand that they can talk to God in their own words at any time.

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Key Themes and Concepts

God Loves Us

1. God Made Us Special
2. God Made the World
3. God Gives Us a Family
4. God Gives Us Jesus
5. Mary is Jesus' Mother
6. God Gives Us Special Time to Celebrate

Prayers to Be Learned

Sign of the Cross

Our Father (optional)

Children are to be led to understand that they can talk to God in their own words at any time.

PRIMARY GRADES

Catechesis at this level focuses on:

Mystery of God: Loving Parent and creator of all people and things. God's goodness and love are seen in creation, other people, and one's own self in personal relationship with the Father, in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Our best response to God is to love God, and to love and care for His people and all of nature.

Jesus Christ: Jesus is God's own son, who lived to show us how to love God and each other. He gave up his own life out of love for us, and who remains with us. The Gospels are the primary source to learn about Jesus.

Sacraments: The meaning of the sacraments as our sharing in God's life and as encounters with Jesus are explained on their developmental level.

There is initial catechesis on the Holy Spirit, the Church and Christian morality.

Mary and the saints and stories of Catholic heroes and heroines are shared.

KINDERGARTEN

Key Themes and Concepts

God Asks Us to Care

1. God Made All People Wonderful
2. God Created the Universe
3. God's Special Gift to Us: Jesus
(Jesus' birth; Holy Family)
4. God Invites Us into God's Family
(Baptism; participation at Mass)
5. The Bible is God's Special Book
(Stories of Creation; Birth of Jesus; Easter)
6. We Celebrate the Liturgical Year
(Advent; Christmas; Lent; Easter)

Prayers to Be Learned

Sign of the Cross
Guardian Angel Prayer
Glory Be (optional)
Hail Mary (optional)
Our Father (optional)

GRADE ONE

Key Themes and Concepts

Meeting God Through Jesus

1. God Loves Us, So Each of Us Is Special
2. God Is Creator of All
3. Jesus Is God's Greatest Gift

- (Stories of Jesus from the Bible; Role of Mary and Joseph)
4. We Belong to Jesus' Family, the Church
(Baptism; Church building; Mass as celebration of God's family)
 5. We Celebrate the Liturgical Year

Prayers to Be Learned

Glory Be
Hail Mary
Our Father
Grace before Meals
Grace after Meals

GRADE TWO

Key Themes and Concepts

Meeting Jesus in Reconciliation and Eucharist

1. Baptism: Called to Follow Jesus
2. Sinfulness: Turning Away from God and God's Family
(Concepts of the Ten Commandments)
3. Reconciliation: Returning to God and God's Family
4. We Celebrate Reconciliation Individually and with the Church Community
(Format for Individual Celebration of Reconciliation)
5. Eucharist Means "Remember" and "Thanksgiving"
(Eucharist is Body and Blood of Jesus)
6. We Celebrate the Eucharist as a Community
(Parts of the Mass)

Prayers to Be Learned

An Act of Contrition
Simple Responses at Mass
Simple Morning Offering

INTERMEDIATE GRADES

Catechesis must create an atmosphere in which an invitation is extended through the sharing of scripture, tradition and the lived faith of those who believed before us in order to partake in the process of becoming a disciple of Jesus.

Catechesis continues to develop an understanding of the Trinity, of God as Creator, of Jesus and the Church, of the work of the Spirit in the Church and of prayer and sacraments. The life of grace and morality continue to be built upon. Children are offered stories of Mary and the saints as role models.

The basis of Christian morality as found in the scriptures, especially in the commandments and the beatitudes are presented. The teaching authority of the Church is explained. The Bible is taught as God's word.

GRADE THREE

Key Themes and Concepts

Jesus Calls Us to Be His Followers

1. Jesus Calls Us to Believe
(Baptism; faith; Apostles)
2. Jesus Calls Us to Serve Others
(Ideas of Beatitudes and Works of Mercy)
3. Jesus Is with Us Always
4. Jesus Shares His Spirit with Us
(Include Sacraments)
5. The Church Remembers Jesus: Liturgical Seasons

Prayers to Be Learned

Apostles' Creed
How to Pray the Rosary (introduce Joyful Mysteries)

GRADE FOUR

Key Themes and Concepts

Living As People of Faith

1. Living as God's People
(Review Mass, Beatitudes, Law of Love)
2. Living God's Love
(Commandments 1-3)
3. Loving One Another
(Commandments 4-10)
4. Living as Followers of Jesus
(Reconciliation; Concepts of Peace and Justice)

Prayers to Be Learned

Sorrowful, Luminous and Glorious Mysteries
Hail Holy Queen

GRADE FIVE

Key Themes and Concepts

Celebrating Jesus' Presence in the Sacraments

1. Sacraments: Signs of Christ Being Present
2. Sacraments of Initiation
(Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist)
3. Sacraments of Healing
(Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick)
4. Sacraments of Service and Commitment
(Holy Orders, Matrimony)
5. Becoming Life Giving People
(Roles of people in the church; Works of Mercy)
6. Being Catholic: Growing in Faith
(Marks of Church; Nicene Creed; Holy Days)

Prayers to Be Learned

Nicene Creed
Prayer to the Holy Spirit

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Adolescent catechesis should relate to Jesus Christ, be rooted in Scripture, be centered in Church, include prayer and worship, promote appropriate action and lifestyle, and find expression in authentic interpretation through critical reflection.

Faith themes for younger adolescent learners include:

- Bible – Old and New Testament
- Christian Prayer and Worship
- Church
- Human Sexuality
- Jesus and the Gospel Message
- Moral decision making
- Mary and other Church heroes and heroines
- Personal Growth
- Relationships
- Service
- Vocation Choices

These themes should be covered within the three years.

GRADE SIX

Key Themes and Concepts

Discovering the Story of God's People

1. The Bible: Beginning Our Faith Story
(God's Revelation; Old and New Testaments; Different styles of writing)
2. Growing in Freedom and Responsibility
(Abraham through David)
3. Becoming a People of Trust and Justice
(Solomon through the Prophets)
4. Jesus Announces the Kingdom of God
(Incarnation and Messiah; Christian Prayer and Action; Resurrection)

Prayers to Be Learned

Memorare
The Angelus

GRADE SEVEN

Key Themes and Concepts

Celebrating the Christian Life

1. Profession of Faith: Trinity, Gospels, Jesus both God and Man, Holy Spirit, Marks of the Church
2. Celebration of the Christian Mystery: Sacraments and Worship
3. Life in Christ: The Christian Life and Social Justice
4. Vocational Choices
5. Christian Prayer

Prayers to Be Learned

Act of Faith
Divine Praises
Prayer of St. Francis

GRADE EIGHT

Key Themes and Concepts

We Believe ...

1. Profession of Faith: Teachings of the Church and Nicene Creed
2. Celebrating the Christian Mystery: Baptism and Confirmation (Choice of Vocation in Life)
3. Life in Christ: Works of Mercy, Beatitudes, Ten Commandments, and Moral Issues (Dignity of Human Life)
4. Christian Prayer
5. The Mass (Practice of Full, Conscious and Active Participation)

Prayers to Be Learned

Act of Hope
Act of Love
Prayer for My Vocation
Prayers for the Dead