

## *Religion Guidelines/Semesters*

### Archdiocese of Philadelphia

These Religion Guidelines are those published in 2000 and revised in 2012 and 2013. Each Grade contains the following:

- The core content with references to scripture

To help teachers in their presentations, the outline is referenced to scripture which suggests certain passages that complement a specific topic in the outline. Teachers are encouraged to use the scripture passages for personal prayer as well as for reflection and for sharing with students. This could help the children become increasingly more familiar and comfortable with scripture and its importance in the lives of both the Church and of those who are followers of Jesus Christ. The numbers on the right side of the page in parentheses correspond to the paragraph numbers in the Catechism of the Catholic Church which treat of a specific subject or concept. This to help the teachers in their own background reading. It is not intended that students be taught directly from the Catechism.

- The Liturgical Year (Ordinary Time; Advent; Christmas Season; Lent; Holy Week; Triduum; Easter Season; Saints and Holy People) is developed according to its appropriate placement in each trimester. The importance of *Sunday* is stressed.
- Summaries of the feasts of Mary and lives of the Saints
- Praying with Children

Each Grade is required to learn certain of our Traditional Catholic Prayers. The versions we should teach can be found in either the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), Appendix B: Traditional Catholic Prayers *or* the Compendium: Catechism of the Catholic Church, Appendix A: Common Prayers (English and Latin).

Hopefully, using these guidelines as the basis of teaching the subject of Religion will contribute to developing a strong religious foundation in the Catholic Faith for each student, and invite the student into the mission of the Church which is the mission of Jesus Christ. It is our hope that each student will come to a deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith and be able to articulate this faith. The faith believed is the faith celebrated in one's full, conscious and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. The faith believed is the faith lived in a moral life that demonstrates the social consequences of living according to the demands of the Gospel. It is a life that serves the needs of others with care and compassion. The faith believed is the faith prayed in attitudes of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and awe for the glory of God.

# *First Semester*

## **I. GOD THE FATHER**

- A. REVEALED HIMSELF AND HIS LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE (2059-60)
- B. REVEALED THE COVENANT ON THE HOLY MOUNTAIN WRITTEN BY HIS OWN FINGER (2056)

## **II. COMMANDMENTS**

Ex. 20:2-17

- A. WORDS OF GOD (2056)
- B. FULL MEANING REVEALED IN JESUS IN THE NEW COVENANT
- C. PATH OF LIFE
- D. COVENANT WITH GOD: DUTIES TO GOD AND TO NEIGHBOR
  - 1. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me. Ex. 20:2-5, Deut. 5:6-9, (2083, 2133-34)
  - 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Ex. 20:7, Deut. 5:11, (2142, 2156, 2160-62, 2166-67)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 3. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.  | Ex. 20:8-10, 31:15,<br>Deut. 5:12-15, (2168-70,<br>2175, 2177, 2189-92) |
| 4. Honor your father and your mother.  | Ex. 20:12, Deut. 5:16,<br>(2197, 2247-48, 2251,<br>2253)                |
| 5. You shall not kill.   | Ex. 20:13, Deut. 5:17,<br>(2258, 2270, 2276, 2288,<br>2307, 2318-20)    |
| 6. You shall not commit adultery.  | Ex. 20:14, Deut. 5:18,<br>(2331-33, 2237, 2393-95)                      |
| 7. You shall not steal.  | Ex. 20:15, Deut. 5:19,<br>(2401, 2426, 2450-54)                         |
| 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.                                   | Ex. 20:16, Deut. 5:20,<br>(2464-65, 2473, 2482-83,<br>2504-05, 2507)    |
| 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house;<br>you shall not covet your neighbor's wife... | Ex. 20:17, (2514,<br>2531-32)   |
| 10. You shall not covet ... anything that is your<br>neighbor's....                          | Ex. 20:17, Deut. 5:21,<br>(2534, 2551-54)                               |

**III. GRACE**

(2003-04)

A. FREE HELP OF GOD

(1996)

B. GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

C. HELPS US IN OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**IV. SIN**

(386, 1440)

**A. ORIGINAL SIN**

(388-89)

1. Definition

Gen. 2:17, 3:1-11,  
(397-98)

2. Effect

Rom. 3:23, (399-402,  
407-08)

**B. PERSONAL SIN**

(1849-51, 1872-73)

1. Mortal Sin

(1855-59)

2. Venial Sin

(1862-63)

**V. CONSCIENCE**

(1783-85)

**A. DESCRIPTIONS**

(1776-85)

1. Present in the heart of a person, it is a voice deep within a person calling one to love and do what is good and to avoid evil.

2. It judges particular choices.

(1777)

3. It enables one to assume responsibility for the acts performed.

(1781)

4. One must always follow one's conscience.

**B. FORMATION**

(1784)

1. A lifelong task

2. Assisted by the Holy Spirit (1785)

3. Guided by the Church

C. EXAMINATION (1454)

1. Preparation for any reception of the sacrament of Penance

2. Daily reflecting on one's moral life in light of the Scriptures (i.e., the *Ten Commandments*, *Beatitudes*, etc.)

**VI. LITURGICAL YEAR (1168-73)**

A. SUNDAY (2177)

The Lord's day is the day on which we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. We go to Mass on this special day to give praise and thanks to God. It is the heart of the Church's life.

B. ORDINARY TIME: liturgical color is green for hope, growth, life.

1. Time in the winter between Christmas time and Lent.

2. Time in the summer and fall from Pentecost to the Feast of Christ the King.

3. Refers to ordinal, counted time.

4. Time to hear the Scriptures proclaimed inviting us to live out the mysteries of our faith and the message of the Gospels.

- a. Cycle A - Gospel of St. Matthew
- b. Cycle B - Gospel of St. Mark
- c. Cycle C - Gospel of St. Luke

C. ADVENT

(524, 1095)

- 1. Liturgical color is purple for preparation, sorrow for sin
- 2. Begins the Liturgical Year
- 3. Period of four weeks of preparation for the birth of Jesus, Christmas
- 4. Advent symbols
  - a. Advent Wreath
    - 1) The circle of greens reminds us that God has no beginning and has no end.
    - 2) There are four candles - three purple and one pink
    - 3) One candle is lit each week.
  - b. Jesse Tree

D. CHRISTMAS

(525-30, 563)

- 1. Liturgical color is white for joy, glory, innocence
- 2. Story of Jesus' Birth Mt. 1:18 - 2:23

E. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

Special days to honor saints are ranked and celebrated in different degrees.

*Solemnity:* liturgies celebrating events, beliefs, and personages of principle importance and universal significance in salvation history

*Feast:* liturgies of major importance

*Memorial:* liturgies celebrating minor events in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of saints significant to a local country, church or religious community

**August 27: St. Monica**

St. Monica was the mother of St. Augustine. She was born in 331 and married a pagan named Patritius. Their marriage was difficult, since he was against her Christian faith. St. Monica had three children, and Augustine was her oldest son. She continued to pray, to act with patience and love, and to give charity to the poor. Eventually, her husband became a Christian and died soon after. Then St. Monica turned all her prayers to Augustine so that he would reform his wayward life. She followed him in his travels, and was joyful to see Augustine baptized in Milan. She died while traveling with St. Augustine to Carthage in 387.

**November 13: St. Frances Xavier Cabrini**

Frances was born in Italy in 1850. She was a school teacher in an orphanage in Italy. Frances founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and, with seven other women, cared for poor children in schools and hospitals. Pope Leo XIII asked her to go to New York City to work with Italian immigrants. Although dreadfully afraid of water, she traveled to New York and in the next thirty years continued to travel, founding more than fifty schools, hospitals, and orphanages in England, France, Spain, and North and South America. She was canonized in 1946 and was the first citizen of the United States to be so recognized.

**November 22: St. Cecilia, Martyr**

St. Cecilia was an early Christian martyr living in Rome, probably in the early part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. She came from a wealthy family and was betrothed to a young Roman named Valerian, whom she converted to Christianity along with his brother. When Valerian and his brother were martyred, Cecilia was arrested and condemned to die. She initially survived the execution, but died three days later after receiving Holy Communion. Legends say she died while singing praises to

God, and for this reason St. Cecilia is the patron saint of musicians. A church founded in her house in Rome in the 5<sup>th</sup> century exists in the same spot today, one of the oldest known sites for an early Christian church in Rome.

**January 5: St. John Neumann**

Born in Bohemia on March 20, 1811, John dedicated his life to missionary work in the United States especially in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. He was ordained a priest in New York in 1836 and first worked with German immigrants near Niagara Falls. As a priest and later as a bishop, he worked tirelessly to educate the members of the Church. He became Bishop of Philadelphia in 1853. He increased the number of parochial schools in Philadelphia, founding the first Catholic diocesan school system in the US. He also instituted the Forty Hours Devotion, and constructed a cathedral. Bishop Neumann died on January 5, 1860, at the age of 48 when he collapsed from a sudden stroke. He was beatified in 1963, and canonized by Pope Paul VI in June 1977.

**VII. MARY**

- A. EXAMPLE OF FAITH (273)
- B. EXAMPLE OF HOLINESS (2030)
- C. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY

**August 22 Memorial of the Queenship of Mary**

In 1954, Pope Pius XII established this feast which honors Mary who was crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth by Jesus when she on the day of her Assumption.

**September 8 Feast of the Birth of Mary**

Mary was the daughter of Saints Ann and Joachim. They prayed that God would bless them with a child, and He rewarded their faithfulness with a daughter set apart to be the mother of the Son of God. Because of this, she was conceived and born immaculate and full of grace. We do not know from the Gospels the exact date of Mary's birth. However, Christians have celebrated it on September 8<sup>th</sup> since the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Mary's birth is one of only three celebrated on the liturgical calendar.



**September 15                      Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows**

Today, we remember how Mary, as the mother of Jesus, suffered greatly. There are seven events in particular that we recognize, called the Seven Sorrows. The Sorrows, which are all found in the Gospels, are the prophecy of Simeon (Lk. 2:34-35), the flight into Egypt to escape Herod (Mt. 2:13-21), the loss of Jesus for three days in the Temple (Lk. 2:41-50), meeting Jesus on the road Calvary (Jn. 19:17), the crucifixion and death of Jesus (Jn. 19:18-30), holding Jesus when He was taken down from the cross (Jn. 19:39-40), and Jesus laid in the tomb (Jn. 19:40-42). St. Bernard wrote, “Truly, O Blessed Mother, a sword has pierced your heart...He died in body through a love greater than anyone had known. She died in spirit through a love unlike any other since His.” Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us.

**October 7                              Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary**

This feast was established by Saint Pius V. Pope Gregory XIII later named this the Feast of the Holy Rosary. This feast invites everyone to meditate upon the mysteries of Christ, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary who was so singularly associated with the incarnation, passion and glorious resurrection of the Son of God. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1285)

**November 19                      Our Lady of Divine Providence**

On November 19, 1969 Pope Paul VI declared Our Lady Mother of Divine Providence principal patroness of the island of Puerto Rico, since November 19 was the date that the island was discovered. The image of Our Lady that is so special to the people of Puerto Rico shows the Divine Child sleeping peacefully in the Virgin Mary's arms. However, the name and worship of Our Lady of the Divine Providence originated in Italy in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, then spread to Spain and then to Puerto Rico.

**November 21                      Memorial of the Presentation of Mary**

The Presentation of Mary is a unique feast day. Although the event is not in the Bible, we learn from other sources that Mary's parents, Ann and Joachim, offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was only three years old. We celebrate this event because it helps us to understand Mary's unique holiness, which was nurtured from the very beginning of her life.

D. PRAYERS

1. The *Hail Mary*
2. The *Hail, Holy Queen*

3. The *Rosary*
4. The *Angelus / Regina Coeli*
5. The *Litany of the Blessed Virgin*

## VIII. PRAYER

### A. MODELS OF PRAYER

Examples of those who listened to God, acted on his Word, and were blessed by God.

1. Old Testament (2568)
  - a. Abraham Gen. 12:4, (2570-72)
  - b. Moses Ex. 3:1-10, (2575-77)
2. New Testament (2598)
  - a. Jesus (2599, 2602)
  - b. Mary (2617-22)

### B. OUR FATHER Mt. 6:9-13, Lk. 11:2-4, (2759)

1. Summary of the whole Gospel (2761)
2. "Our Father" (2786-87)

### C. ASPIRATIONS

1. Short prayer invoking the name or title of a saint.

2. Common response: pray for us.
3. Example: *Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.*

D. OTHER PRAYER FORMS (See Prayer Appendix)

1. The “Jesus Prayer”
2. Praying in Common (Choral Prayer)
3. Song and Gesture
4. Meditation

**IX. SACRAMENTALS** (1667-79)

- A. SACRED SIGNS (1667)
- B. PREPARE US FOR GRACE (1670)
- C. HELP US TO COOPERATE WITH GRACE

**X. SOCIAL JUSTICE**

*“The commitment to human life and dignity, to human rights and solidarity, is a calling all Catholic educators must share with their students. It is not a vocation for a few religion teachers, but a challenge for every Catholic educator and catechist.”*

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions, USCC, 1998, p. 7

**Major Themes:**

**The Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

**Call to Family, Community and Participation**

**Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person**

**Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

**A. AWARENESS OF THE UNIQUE IMPORTANCE OF EACH PERSON**

1. Celebrate each person’s birthday, cultural and ethnic heritage
2. Write to a legislator about issues affecting the poor and vulnerable

**B RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS**

1. Participate in parish and/or school collections: food, clothing, toys, etc.
2. Connect with Archdiocesan Social Service Agencies.

# *Second Semester*

## **I. JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER**

- A. REVEALS MEANING OF NEW COVENANT
  
- B. FULFILLS GOD'S PROMISES

## **II. THE BEATITUDES**

Mt. 5:3-12, Lk. 6:20-26,  
(1716-17)

- A. THE HEART OF JESUS' PREACHING
  
- B. EXPRESS THE VOCATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL
  - 1. Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
  
  - 2. Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they shall be comforted.
  
  - 3. Blessed are the meek,  
for they shall inherit the earth.
  
  - 4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
  
for they shall be satisfied.
  
  - 5. Blessed are the merciful,  
for they shall obtain mercy.

6. Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they shall be called children of God.
8. Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

### **III. WORKS OF MERCY**

#### **A. CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY**

Actions that show respect for the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Welcome the stranger. / Shelter the homeless.
4. Clothe the naked.
5. Visit the sick.
6. Visit those in prison.
7. Bury the dead.

#### **B. SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY**

1. Teach the ignorant.
2. Give advice to those who need it. / Counsel the doubtful.

3. Comfort those who suffer.
4. Be patient with others. / Bear wrongs patiently.
5. Forgive those who hurt you.
6. Correct those who need it.
7. Pray for others.

**IV. VIRTUE**

(1803)

**A. CARDINAL VIRTUES**

(1805-09)

1. Prudence
2. Justice
3. Fortitude
4. Temperance

**B. THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES**

(1812)

1. Faith (1814-16, 2088, 2098)
2. Hope (1817-21, 2091, 2098)
3. Charity (1822-24, 2093, 2095)

**V. LITURGICAL YEAR**

**A. LENT**

(1095)

1. Time of preparation for Easter

2. From Ash Wednesday to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
3. Liturgical color is purple for penance

B. HOLY WEEK

1. Palm Sunday Jn. 12:12-19
2. Triduum
  - a. Holy Thursday Mt. 26:26-35  
Mass of the Lord's Supper Mk. 14:22-31  
Lk. 22:14-23
  - b. Good Friday Mt. 27, Mk. 15, Lk. 23  
Celebration of the Lord's Passion  
Liturgical color is red for the  
blood of Jesus shed for us.
  - c. Holy Saturday
  - d. Easter  
Sunset of Holy Saturday to sunset of  
Easter Sunday

C. EASTER SEASON (1168-69)

Sunset of Easter Sunday to sunset of the Solemnity of Pentecost

1. Easter Sunday: liturgical color is white Mt. 28:1-15, Mk. 16:1-8,  
for joy, glory, innocence Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20:1-10
2. Ascension Thursday: liturgical color is white Mt. 28:16-20,  
Mk. 16:19-20,  
Lk. 24:50-53,  
Acts 1:6-12
3. Pentecost: liturgical color is red Acts 2:1-4  
for the Holy Spirit



D. OTHER CELEBRATIONS

1. Trinity Sunday - Sunday after Pentecost
2. Corpus Christi (Body and Blood of Christ) - Sunday after Trinity Sunday
3. Solemnity of the Sacred Heart - Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost

E. ORDINARY TIME: Liturgical color is green for hope, growth, life

F. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

**Canonization** - the declaration by the pope that (828)  
a person is a saint, is now in heaven, and is worthy  
of veneration by all the faithful.

**Relic** - Part of the physical remains of a saint or  
an object closely associated with a saint...

**February 8: St. Josephine Bakhita**

St. Josephine's life began happily with her family in Sudan, Africa in 1869. Tragically, she was kidnapped by Arab slave traders when she was just seven. They named her Bakhita, which means "lucky." She spent the next twelve years sold from owner to owner, suffering cruel treatment. In 1888, Bakhita was serving an Italian family as a nanny. They left her and the child at a Canossian convent in Venice. There, she first learned about Jesus. She refused to leave the convent, and because Italian law did not recognize slavery, she was allowed to stay. Baptized as Josephine Margaret, she became a Canossian sister in 1896. She spent the remaining 45 years of her life in the convent in Schio, where she was beloved for her smile and gentle nature. Her holiness was well known during her life. She often said she would kiss the hands of her kidnappers and slave masters because without those terrible events, she would never have become a Christian. She died in 1947 and was canonized St. Josephine Bakhita in 2000.

**March 3: St. Katharine Drexel**

St. Katharine Drexel was raised right here in Philadelphia. She was born in 1858 to an extremely wealthy family. The Drexel home was opened to the poor three days a week. From a young age, Katharine was shown what it means to be compassionate and charitable towards the poor. During a trip to Italy in 1886,

Pope Leo XIII encouraged her to become a missionary and devote herself to God. She did and donated her massive inheritance to charity. In 1891, she took her first vows and established the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She worked to change racial attitudes towards African Americans and American Indians. Her nuns labored to provide education and care to these under-served communities. St. Katharine established many missions for American Indians throughout the United States. During her life, she was known for her love of the Eucharist, her work promoting equal education for all, and her desire to reach out to those on the margins of society. She died in 1955 and was canonized by Blessed Pope John Paul II in 2000.

**April 28: St. Gianna Molla**

St. Gianna Molla was a mother, wife and pediatrician who gave her life to protect her unborn child. She was born in Italy in 1922 and became a doctor in 1949. She married Pietro Molla in 1955 and they had three children. Gianna remained active as a pediatrician while caring for her children. In 1961, she became pregnant with her fourth child. She learned she had a tumor and was advised to have an abortion or risk losing her own life. Insistent that the life of her child be placed above her own, Gianna refused the abortion. On April 21, 1962, she gave birth to a healthy girl. However, there were complications and St. Gianna died seven days later. St. Gianna Molla was canonized by Blessed Pope John Paul II in 2004, and her husband and children attended the ceremony. She is the first female physician and working mother to be canonized. Rather than exalted for embracing religious life after becoming widowed like many other women saints, St. Gianna is exalted specifically because of the heroic virtue she demonstrated as a wife and mother.

**June 3: St. Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs**

St. Charles Lwanga was born in Uganda around 1860. He was a page in the court of King Mwangi II. The king, wanting to show resistance to foreign occupation, began to persecute Christian missionaries. Eventually, he persecuted the Ugandans who had chosen to embrace Christianity. As St. Charles watched the killings spread, he chose to embrace the faith and asked to be baptized by a missionary priest. In 1886, the king gathered all of the royal pages together and insisted they renounce Christianity. Those who refused were sentenced to die. St. Charles was martyred with eleven other Catholic men and boys, and nine Anglicans.

**July 14: St. Kateri Tekakwitha**

St. Kateri Tekakwitha was a Mohawk Indian born in 1656. Her parents died when she was young and her tribe suffered from smallpox and many attacks from French and Dutch colonists. During this time, Kateri met several Jesuit missionaries and eventually the chief of her tribe converted. In 1675, she began to

study the catechism with the Jesuits and was baptized a year later. Although there was no religious order for her to join, St. Kateri vowed to remain chaste and gathered with other Christian Indian women to live devoutly. She endured any suffering as a way to become closer to Jesus. St. Kateri Tekakwitha died in 1680 at the age of twenty-four. She is called the Lily of the Mohawks.

**July 22: St. Mary Magdalene**

Mary Magdalene was one of the disciples of Jesus and appears in all four Gospels. Luke tells us that Jesus had cured Mary Magdalene of a disease. She followed Him and the Twelve Apostles as they traveled around Judea. However, her most important role was that of a witness to Jesus' death and resurrection. Together with Mary, the mother of James, she was there when Jesus was buried by Joseph of Aramathea. Mary Magdalene, along with other women, discovered the empty tomb. Most importantly, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first after His resurrection. It is she who tells the Apostles the Good News. Although we do not know what happened to her, it is clear from the Gospels that she played an important role as a disciple of Jesus.

**VI. MARY**

**A. APPARITIONS**

1. Definition - an extraordinary, visible appearance seen by one or more persons. The authenticity of it is a matter for evaluation by the Church.  
The Essential Catholic Handbook, Liguori, 1997, p. 133

2. Principle Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Banneux, Belgium - 1933

Beauraing, Belgium - 1932-33

Fatima, Portugal - 1917

Guadalupe, Mexico - 1531

Knock, Ireland - 1879

LaSalette, France - 1846

Lourdes, France - 1858

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, France - 1830

**B. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY**

**February 2: Purification of Mary/Presentation of the Lord**

Mary and Joseph presented the newborn Jesus at the Temple, according to Jewish law, forty days after his birth. They sacrificed a pair of turtledoves, according to the custom of the poor. At the temple, they met Simeon, a man whom God had promised would not die until he saw the Savior. Upon seeing Jesus, Simeon prayed, "Lord, now let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled" (Luke 2:29). Simeon also prophesied to Mary, "A sword will pierce your soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:34-35). The presentation of Jesus in the temple is the Fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary.

**February 11 Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes**

Mary appeared to a fourteen year old girl named Bernadette Soubirous on February 11, 1858 in Lourdes, France. Our Lady appeared dressed in white with a blue sash, yellow roses at her feet and a rosary in her hand. Mary appeared eighteen times to Bernadette. The Lady told her many things among them that, although Bernadette would not find happiness in this life, she would find it in Heaven. She told her to pray for sinners and to do penance. The Blessed Mother told Bernadette to have a chapel built at the site where she appeared and that processions were to be held. When Bernadette asked the Lady what her name was, she said, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Through Bernadette, the Blessed Mother called sinners to a change in heart, to reach out and care for the sick, the poor, and those who had lost hope. Each year millions of people make their way through the mountainous country of southeastern France to the shrine at Lourdes. They come to ask Jesus through the intercession of his Mother for a cure of their body or soul.

**March 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation**

The Annunciation is the feast commemorating the appearance of the Angel Gabriel to Mary. The angel told her that she had been chosen to be the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Most High God. Mary, through the power of the Holy Spirit, became the Mother of Jesus.

**May 31 Feast of the Visitation Luke 1:39-56**

The Presentation of Mary is a unique feast day. Although the event is not in the Bible, we learn from other sources that Mary's parents, Ann and Joachim, offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was only three years old. We celebrate this event because it helps us to Lord and obeying His will in all things.

**May or June                      Immaculate Heart of Mary**  
(Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost)

**August 15                      Solemnity of the Assumption**  
Pope Pius XII, on November 1, 1950, infallibly defined what Catholics always believed: Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven. (CCC #966)

C. TITLES OF MARY

1. The Immaculate Conception - under this title Mary is patroness of the United States and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
2. Our Lady - Notre Dame (French for "Our Lady")

**VII. PRAYER**

A. PRAISE AND THANKS

1. "To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord:" (*Eucharistic Prayer I*)
2. "It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ." (*Eucharistic Prayer II*)
3. "You are indeed Holy, O Lord, and all you have created rightly gives you praise" (*Eucharistic Prayer III*)
4. "We give you praise, Father most holy, for you are great, and you have fashioned all your works in wisdom and in love. (*Eucharistic Prayer IV*)

B. CONTRITION (1451-54)

1. Definition - sorrow for sin and the intention of sinning no more
2. Most important act of the penitent in the Sacrament of Penance
3. A gift of God and a prompting of the Holy Spirit (1453)
4. Act of Contrition

C. OTHER FORMS OF PRAYER  
(See Prayer Appendix)

1. Journal Keeping
2. Guided Meditation
3. Shared Prayer

**VIII. SACRAMENTALS** (1667-79)

A. BLESSINGS (1678)

B. CONSECRATION (1672)

1. Things
2. People

C. INSTITUTED BY THE CHURCH (1667)

D. HAVE MEANING AND PURPOSE (1668)

**IX. SOCIAL JUSTICE**

*"The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society.... In this time of widespread violence and diminished respect for human life and dignity in our country and around the world, the Gospel of life and the biblical call to justice need to be proclaimed and shared with new clarity, urgency, and energy."*

*Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions*, USCC, 1998, p. 4

**Major Themes:**

**Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**

**Solidarity of the Human Family**

**Care for God's Creation**

A. AWARENESS OF THOSE WHO SUFFER

1. Participate in Operation Rice Bowl, the Bishop's Relief Fund and/or the Holy Childhood Association (HCA)
2. Encourage children to be conscientious about not wasting food and natural resources.

B. AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK

1. Practice care of personal belongings
2. Show care of classrooms, school buildings, and parish grounds
3. Encourage respect for each one's responsibilities
  - a. At home
  - b. In school

**HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION**

In the United States, there are six holydays:

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mary, Mother of God, January 1 | 4. All Saints, November 1            |
| 2. Ascension Thursday             | 5. Immaculate Conception, December 8 |
| 3. Assumption, August 15          | 6. Christmas, December 25            |

# *Prayer Appendix*

## **The Jesus Prayer**

The **Jesus Prayer** is used as a “prayer word” simply by uttering the word “Jesus” or the phrase “Lord, Jesus, have mercy on me” in harmony with one’s breathing. This technique is a help to become “centered” or still within one’s being.

All the various activities in a child’s life can distract her/him from the important task of building a relationship with the all-holy, transcendent God. This *prayer form* is especially helpful if the classroom mood is restless or emotionally charged. It allows you and the children to become still, to become more aware of the Presence of God and to rest in that Presence.

### **Technique:**

Address the children in words similar to these:

1. Let’s settle down and become very quiet so that we can experience God’s Presence here in this room, within us. God is as close to us as our own breath. Now close your eyes and take in a deep breath.  
**DO THIS WITH THE CHILDREN** at this point.  
Then, let it out very, very slowly.
2. Now let us breathe and pray all together.  
  
Breath in. **PAUSE.** Breath out. **PAUSE.**  
Breathe in and pray, “Jesus” or “Lord Jesus.”  
Breathe out and pray, “have mercy on me.”

Repeat this as you continue to breathe.

Continue this exercise until you feel the room quiet. Then join the children entrusted to your care in prayer to the God who has loved them - and you - into being.

- |          |                 |               |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| 3. Time: | Primary grades: | 3 - 4 minutes |
|          | Intermediate:   | 4 - 5 minutes |
|          | Upper:          | 5 - 8 minutes |



4. Other Prayer Words that could be used as a substitute:

“Lord Jesus - I love you.”

“Spirit of God - fill me with love.”

Feel free to use your favorite phrases.

## Choral Speech (Praying in Common)

This *prayer form* invites all to pray as one voice in response to another through the use of selected religious readings or Scripture. The **Psalms** lend themselves to this type of reading.

To develop an understanding of praying in unison, or as reply to another, it is necessary to communicate a sense of rhythm by reading, singing within parts, speaking in different voices. Examples: “O” antiphons, Canticles (Magnificat, Benedictus), psalms, hymns, prayers, litanies, novena, etc.

### Technique:

1. Make copies of the *choral reading* for each of the students.
2. Divide the children into groups and assign the parts to be read in unison rhythmically by each group.
3. Decide if any parts are to be read individually and assign those parts.

## Song and Gesture

Singing is particularly popular with young children, but can be used when praying with children of all ages. Gesture helps the children to express their feelings through the use of body language. Combining song and gesture makes for a very expressive prayer form.

**Technique:**

- 1 Explain that gesture and song are acceptable *prayer forms*. Prayer is not just rote-recited prayers.
2. Choose a song with gestures with which you are familiar. Listen to the song and teach the gestures to the class.
3. Explain to the children that they are now going to create gestures of their own for a given song.
4. Upon choosing an appropriate hymn for the liturgical season, divide the children into groups. Assign each group a verse of the hymn. Instruct the group to create their own gestures for the assigned verse or chorus.
5. Have each group present their gestures to be learned by the entire class. This song can now be used during a prayer service.

## Journal Keeping

This *prayer form* (tool) enables a student to reflect on the goals and directions of his/her life, and to appreciate and deepen a personal relationship with a loving Father. It provides a method to assess these experiences.

**Technique:** Grades 1 - 3

Journal Keeping could be adapted to the level of the student. Responses could be in written or picture form. Springboards to follow a religion lesson could be:

- How would you feel if you had been at the Last Supper?
- How do you think Jesus felt when His friends, the apostles, all walked away from Him?
- If you were blind, how would you feel if Jesus helped you to see? What would you say to Him?

Grades 4 - 8

- 1 Present the value of journal-keeping as a means of writing personal thoughts and feelings.
2. Differentiate “diary” from “journal.” A diary records personal thoughts and feelings; a journal records personal feelings and thoughts addressed to God as Father, Jesus as Brother, Friend.
3. There is no one particular format. Journaling may be in the form of an informal letter (Dear Father, from Your son/daughter), (Dear Jesus, from Your pal), or a poem, etc.
4. A copybook should be set aside for this special purpose. This helps to make it a special book for conversations with God.

Discuss the idea of a spiritual journey with students: one in which they will discover things about themselves and God. Ask them to think of pictures, symbols, and words that help them to think about God and the things He has created.

Decorate the cover with pictures and / or words which represent aspects of the student’s self.

Discuss titles that would express the above discussion. Allow each student to design artistically a title page.

5. Establish a quiet atmosphere in the classroom for this special time. As a class, journal several times a week. However, students should feel free to use the journal at any time to express their thoughts and feelings to God.
6. Students need to be assured that no one will read their journals without permission. Periodic evaluation with students can take place to determine effectiveness of journaling.
7. Journaling is a student’s personal response from a springboard initiated by the teacher. Such springboards can come from:
  - the Religion lesson (Is there enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian? What are some signs in your life?)
  - a particular Scripture passage

- inspirational quotes, such as found on calendars, etc.
- reflections on personal talents, gifts or on those shared with us by others (In your life who reminds you of God and makes you feel special?)
- problems encountered by the age group or within your class, e.g., How does it feel to be left out of a group, to be ignored?

## Meditation

Meditation is a form of mental prayer in which one thinks reflectively about God, the Blessed Mother, the saints, or the mysteries of faith.

### Technique:

1. Select a Scripture passage. Choose one that is suggested in the Religion textbook.
2. Establish quiet time for approximately two or three minutes before the reading of the passage.
3. Read the passage slowly, aloud or softly. Repeat a word or phrase to capture the attention of the listener.
4. Allow about three or four minutes of quiet time to awaken feelings.
5. Respond with or without words. Remind students of different types of prayer, praise, love, thanksgiving, and petition.

### Suggestions for Levels

#### Primary:

Stress that mental prayer or meditation is listening and talking quietly to God. Encourage students to listen to a selected Scripture story or view a slide presentation or audio-visual reflection. Children should be directed to think about what God is saying to them in this story. Encourage a short response such as the following:

Thank you, God.  
I love you, God.  
I am sorry, God, etc.

One acclamation should be selected by the child and repeated silently. Allow approximately three minutes for this prayer. Some may choose to share their response with others, to draw a picture of themselves in the Scripture story, or print their short response in their prayer notebook.

Intermediate:

Repeat all or any of the above.

Children may write their own prayer. They may volunteer to read their prayer. In order to keep the spirit of prayer, no more than one child's prayer should be read at a given time.

Junior High:

Use any of the above suggestions.

Follow - up activity: Write a modern day story which parallels the Scripture story.

Teacher would ask questions after the meditation such as: Whom would you like to be in the story? Why? What struck you about the story? Why?, etc.

## **Guided Meditation**

Guided Meditation allows the children to consider a Bible verse. It encourages the children to consider their feelings and their relationship with God.

**Technique:**

1. Call the children to prayer, invite them to be still.
2. When they are still and quiet, invite the children to close their eyes. Remind them

to listen very carefully and to try to keep their minds really focused on what you are going to read to them.

3. When they are quiet, read them the story of Jesus blessing the children (Matthew 19: 13 - 15). You may want to read it again after a short pause.
4. Allow a few minutes to pass. Then suggest the children imagine themselves as one of the children whom Jesus blessed. Encourage them to see themselves with Jesus, to imagine where they are. Suggest that they think about how it felt to be near Jesus, how it felt to be sent away from Jesus, and how it felt to be blessed by Jesus. Any ideas of your own would be great!
5. Allow a few minutes for children to consider this. Encourage the children to remember a time when they felt loved and blessed. Who was there? When did this happen? Where did his happen?
6. Older children may be more comfortable seated in a circle facing away from the center.
7. Many other gospel stories lend themselves to guided meditation. For example: The Ten Lepers, Jesus on the Road to Emmaus, or the parable of the Good Samaritan.

**Follow Up:**

Primary: Draw what you imagined. Write a prayer thanking Jesus for his blessing.

Intermediate: Discuss the blessings they have received. Write a prayer thanking God for these blessings.

Junior High: Journal their feelings during this meditation. Discuss times when you have not felt loved or blessed. Discuss how to help others feel loved and blessed.

## Shared Prayer

This *prayer form* helps the students to become more aware and sensitive to God's presence in their lives and in the world around them and to aid them in responding to that presence by sharing prayer with others. This prayer may be spontaneous by having them respond to a few questions relating to a passage read from scripture, or it may take on a more structured format such as creating a litany or the format of the *Prayer of the Faithful* in the Eucharistic Liturgy.

### Technique:

1. Take the time to create a prayerful environment; if possible darken the room, have a lit candle. In some way, make a conscious effort to change the area from what the students ordinarily experience. Prepare the students by setting a tone of quiet reverence.
2. For **Intermediate** or **Junior High** levels select one of the students to do the reading of the Scripture passage. Give him/her the selection ahead of time and have him/her carefully prepare, read slowly, etc. For **Primary** levels, it may be best to do the reading yourself. You may want to use a children's Bible for easier understanding.
3. During the Lenten Season, we take on a new awareness of Jesus' life in the light of His passion, death, and His new life in glory. Select a passage from one of the Gospels on the passion of Jesus.
4. Allow for a period of silent reflection following the reading.

5. For **Primary** levels, prepare beforehand materials needed for drawing: paper, crayons, markers, etc. Have the children draw a picture of the story and then describe what they drew. You may aid them by asking a few questions, e.g. How do you think Jesus felt when the crowd mocked him and his close friends deserted him? Have they ever felt that no one cared?
6. For the **Intermediate** and **Junior High** levels, prior to the prayer experience, it will be necessary to prepare the students by familiarizing them with the formula used for the *General Intercessions* at Mass.
7. Help them to move from the time of Jesus to our own time. In the reflection on the passion of Jesus we are able to see that we are not alone in our suffering. When we condemn others because of race, color, or religion we are repeating the action of Pilate. Mary's sorrow today is shared by the families of sons and daughters of all the war-torn nations of the world. Reflected in Jesus' innocence is the innocent children in famine-afflicted countries, etc.
8. Invite them to write a prayer about one of the many concerns of our world today. These can be put together to be used as a *Prayer of the Faithful*.