

## *Religion Guidelines*

# Archdiocese of Philadelphia

These Religion Guidelines are those published in 2000; reformatted into trimesters in 2006; 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 Trimester*

## **I. THE TRINITY**

(232, 234, 237, 257, 261)

A. CENTRAL MYSTERY OF OUR FAITH

B. COMMUNITY OF LOVE CONSISTING OF  
GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND  
GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

C. GOD THE FATHER -  
THE FIRST PERSON OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

Gn. 1:1-13, Ex. 3:1-20,  
Ps. 8:1-9, 150:1-6,  
Jn. 1:17 -18, 1 Jn. 4:7-13

1. Creator of all

(279, 282, 293, 319)

a. Creates freely out of nothing and out of love

b. Created the world to show forth and  
communicate his glory.

2. Father of us all

3. God reveals himself to us

(35, 50)

4. Some characteristics of God

(268-70)

a. Holy

(208)

b. Almighty (Omnipotent)

c. All-knowing (omniscient)

- d. All-merciful
- e. All-loving
- f. Everlasting (212)

D. GOD THE SON - JESUS  
THE SECOND PERSON OF THE BLESSED TRINITY Is. 9:1-7, Lk. 1:26-38,  
Lk. 1:39-45, 2:1-20  
Mt. 3:13-17, Mt. 6:7-15,  
Jn. 1:17-18

1. Savior

- a. Jesus died to save us. (457, 605, 629)
- b. Jesus opened heaven to us.

2. Names given to Jesus

- a. Christ, Messiah - Anointed One
- b. Savior - One who saves
- c. Redeemer - One who redeems
- d. Lord - Jesus is truly God
- e. Son of God and Son of Mary
- f. Emmanuel - God with us

E. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT -  
THE THIRD PERSON OF THE BLESSED TRINITY Gn.1:1-2, 2:7, Ps.51:10-11  
Ex. 36:2, Mt. 3:13-17,  
Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21-22,  
Lk. 4:16-18, Jn. 14: 14-21,  
Rom. 8: 9-11, 1 Jn. 4:7-13

- 1. The Paraclete promised by Jesus (747)
- 2. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles at Pentecost Acts 2: 1-4
- 3. The *Epiclesis* at Mass

The Holy Spirit is called upon during the Eucharistic Prayer to make the gifts and the people holy. During this prayer, the priest extends his hands over the bread and wine, and the people.

## II. SACRAMENTS

(1210)

Jesus Christ instituted the Seven Sacraments.

### A. THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Mt. 28:19-20,  
Lk. 22:14-20, Jn. 6:32-40,  
Jn. 4:13-14, Jn. 20:19-29,  
Acts 2:1-12, (1210)

The sacraments of Christian initiation - *Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist* are the foundation of the Christian life.

#### 1. Baptism

Mt. 3:13-17, 28:16-20,  
Jn. 4:13, Acts 1:5,  
Eph. 4:4-6, (1213)

##### a. Effects of Baptism

- 1) We are freed from original sin and all sin
- 2) We are reborn as children of God (782, 804)
- 3) We receive an indelible *spiritual mark* (character).  
The effect lasts forever.  
This sacrament is received only once.
- 4) We become members of the Body of Christ
- 5) We are incorporated into the Church
- 6) We are made sharers in the Church's mission.

##### b. Symbols

(1234-45)

- 1) Water
- 2) Oils (of Catechumen and Chrism)
- 3) Candles (Paschal and Baptismal)
- 4) Baptismal garment
- 5) Words and actions

##### c. Ordinary Minister

- 1) The priest or deacon

- 2) In case of emergency, any person with the proper intention

d. Responsibilities of the Baptized

- 1) To love God and others
- 2) To live up to our baptismal promises

2. Confirmation (1285)

“For ‘by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.’”

- a. Effect of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit (1302)

- b. Indelible *spiritual mark* (character); like Baptism this sacrament is received only once. (1304-05)

c. Symbols (1300)

- 1) Laying on of hands
- 2) Anointing with Chrism
- 3) Words used:

*Bishop:* N., Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit

*Response:* Amen.

*Bishop:* Peace be with you.

*Response:* And with your spirit.

d. Ordinary Minister - the bishop (1312)

e. How the sacrament is celebrated - usually during the celebration of Mass

- 1) Presentation of the candidates
- 2) Renewal of Baptismal Promises
- 3) Imposition of hands
- 4) Anointing with chrism

3. Holy Eucharist (1113, 1210-11, 1322-27, 1343, 1395)

“The Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation.” (1322)

“The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life.” (1324)

The Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

a. Names (1328-32)

- 1) Holy Eucharist
- 2) Holy Communion (1331)
- 3) Blessed Sacrament (1330)
- 4) Body and Blood of Christ
- 5) Thanksgiving (1328)

b. Stories of the Last Supper-the First Eucharist Mt. 26:25-29, Mk. 14:22-25, Lk. 22:14-20, Jn. 6:28-58; 13:1-16, Acts 2:42-43, 1 Cor. 10:16-18; 11:23-27

c. Signs - bread and wine

d. Minister - the priest

e. Celebrating the Sacrament

- 1) Mass - a share in Jesus' Last Supper
- 2) Consecration of the Mass (1353)  
The Holy Spirit, through the action of the priest, changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

f. Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (1379-80)

- 1) Blessed Sacrament not consumed (1378, 1418)  
at Mass is reserved in the tabernacle
  - (a) Sanctuary Lamp
  - (b) Genuflection

- 2) Adoration
  - (a) Monstrance
  - (b) Incense
- 3) Benediction - highlights presence of Christ in the Eucharist (Holy Communion and the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass)
  - (a) Readings from the Word of God
  - (b) Hymns
  - (c) Prayers
  - (d) Time for silent adoration
  - (e) Blessing of the people with the sacred host

### III. MARY

(971)

#### A TITLES OF MARY

- 1. Mother of God
  - “Mary is truly ‘Mother of God’ since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made flesh, Who is God himself.”
- 2. Our Mother
- 3. Mary as Model for all believers
- 4. Mother of the Church
- 5. The Immaculate Conception - Patroness of the United States and of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- 6. Our Lady of Guadalupe - Patroness of the Americas

#### B. DAYS IN HONOR OF OUR LADY

##### **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.

**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.

C. PRAYER TO OUR LADY - The *Rosary* (2708)

1. The *Joyful Mysteries*
2. The *Sorrowful Mysteries*
3. The *Glorious Mysteries*
4. The *Luminous Mysteries*



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

A. **SUNDAY** - the Lord's day is the day on which we celebrate Jesus Resurrection. (2177)  
It is the heart of the Church's life.

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

C. **ADVENT** (524-1095)

1. Liturgical color is purple: preparation, sorrow for sin, repentance

2. Period of four weeks of preparation for Christmas

3. Advent symbols

a. Jesse Tree - recalls how people since Adam and Eve have awaited Jesus' birth

b. Advent wreath

D. **CHRISTMAS** (525-30)

1. Liturgical Color is white: joy, glory, innocence

2. Story of Jesus' Birth Mt. 1:18- 2-23  
Lk. 2: 1-20

E. **SAINTS AND HOPLY PEOPLE**  
Special days to honor saints are ranked and celebrated in different degrees.

*Solemnity:* liturgies celebrating events, beliefs, and personages of principal 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

**September 21: St. Matthew, Apostle**

St. Matthew was born in Capernaum and was also known as Levi. Jesus chose him to be one of the twelve apostles. Before his work with Jesus, he was a tax collector and therefore most likely more educated than some of the other apostles. Matthew was a witness to Jesus' death and resurrection. He first preached the Good News that Jesus taught in Judea, and later traveled to other countries. He wrote the Gospel of Matthew, which is the first of the Synoptic Gospels since he likely wrote it fifteen to twenty years after the resurrection of Jesus. Although we do not know for certain how he died, he is believed to have been martyred.

**October 1: St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor**

Thérèse was born in Normandy, France in 1873, the youngest of five daughters born to Blessed Zélie and Louis Martin. Throughout her childhood, St. Thérèse felt the call to be a Carmelite nun like her older sister Pauline. She entered the Carmelite monastery at Caen in 1888 when she was just fifteen. She lived a life of humility, simplicity, and trust in God. St. Thérèse wanted to always perform small acts, rather than great deeds, for the glory of God. This became her "little way," and every sacrifice became a joy to her. St. Thérèse taught virtue by her word and example. Her sisters encouraged her to write about her own life. Later, this spiritual memoir became *The Story of a Soul*. St. Thérèse died in 1897 of tuberculosis at age 24, after much suffering. The story of her life quickly spread and devotion to her grew. She was canonized in 1925. In 1997, Blessed Pope John Paul II declared her one of the thirty-three Doctors of the Church, one of four women to receive the title. St. Thérèse is the patroness of the missions. She is known as the Little Flower.

**October 4: St. Francis of Assisi**

St. Francis founded the Franciscan Order. He was born in Assisi, Italy in 1181 to a wealthy family and given every comfort. His youth was full of parties and excess and he had hopes of becoming a knight. He distinguished himself in battle against the neighboring town of Perugia and was taken captive for a year. Intending to join the knights in the army of Walter of Brienne, Francis set out in magnificent armor only to return a few days later after a dream told him to return to Assisi. Slowly, he sought out a new and sober life. He began to seek out the poor and sick and made a pilgrimage to Rome. He gave up his inheritance and devoted himself to a life of poverty. Within a year he had eleven followers. In 1209, he wrote a

simple rule for his followers, or “friars,” and gained official acceptance from Pope Innocent III in 1210. St. Francis and his friars embraced poverty, loved nature and animals, devoted themselves to the Eucharist and to helping the poor. He also received the stigmata. He died in 1226 and was made a saint just two years later.

**October 18: Feast of St. Luke, Evangelist**

Luke was born in Antioch, Syria, and was the only Gentile Christian among the Gospel writers. He wrote the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Paul calls him “our beloved physician,” and thus he is the patron saint of physicians and surgeons. He became a missionary companion of St. Paul, and even accompanied him on his last journey to Rome. Luke’s Gospel is unique in that he includes six miracles and eighteen parables not found in the other Gospels. Luke also writes more about Mary and about Jesus as a child. Each of the four Gospel writers has a unique symbol and Luke’s is an ox, symbolizing sacrifice.

**V. PRAYER**

(2590)

**A. TRADITIONAL**

1. The Sign of the Cross

(2157)

2. Our Father

Mt 6:7-15,(2792-93,2801)

3. Hail Mary

Lk. 1:26-38

4. Doxology (Glory Be...)

5. Prayers of the Mass

6. Act of Contrition

7. Grace before and after Meals

(2698)

8. Acts of Faith, Hope and Love

9. The Rosary

10. Hail, Holy Queen

Grade 3

11. Angel of God

12. Apostles Creed

(190)

**VI. SACRAMENTALS**

(1667-79)

A. BLESSED ASHES

B. BLESSED PALMS

C. BLESSED MEDALS

D. STATUES / ICONS

# *Second Trimester*

## I. SACRAMENTS

### A. SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

Mt. 22:34-49, Lk. 7:44-50.  
Lk. 23:33-34, Jn. 15:12,  
Acts 2:37-41

“The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily healthy, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of penance and the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.”

(1421)

#### 1. Penance and Reconciliation

(1423-24, 1486)

##### a. Effect

- 1) Forgiveness of sins
- 2) Reconciliation with God and the Church

##### b. Symbols

- 1) Imposition of hands
- 2) Words of Absolution

##### c. Minister - priest

#### 2. Anointing of the Sick

Jas. 5:14-15, (1509)

“By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them.”

##### a. Effect

(1499)

- 1) Spiritual and sometimes physical healing

2) Forgiveness of sins

b. Symbols

- 1) Imposition of hands
- 2) Anointing with the Oil of the Sick  
(Oil of the Infirm)

c. Minister - the priest

d. How the sacrament is celebrated

- 1) Prayer over the sick
- 2) Imposition of hands
- 3) Anointing with oil

## B. THE SACRAMENTS AT THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

“Two other sacraments, Holy Orders and Matrimony are directed towards the salvation of others; if they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so. They confer a particular mission in the Church and serve to build up the People of God.”

(1534)

1. Holy Orders

(1536, 1554, 1593)

a. Effect

- 1) In this sacrament, a man is ordained a deacon, priest or bishop.
- 2) This sacrament, like Baptism and Confirmation, confers an indelible *spiritual character* (mark) and can be received only once.
- 3) The mission entrusted by Jesus Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time.
- 4) It is a sacrament of service to God's people.

b. How the sacrament is celebrated

- 1) Imposition of hands
- 2) Anointing of palms of the hands with chrism
- 3) Prayer of consecration
- 4) Giving of chalice and paten

- c. Minister - the bishop
- d. Celebrated during the Eucharistic Liturgy

2. Matrimony (1601)

- a. Effect
  - 1) A man and woman promise each other before God and the Church to love and honor each other for the rest of their lives.
  - 2) In this sacrament God gives the man (1603) and woman the grace to make lifelong promises.
  - 3) This promise has been raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of a sacrament.
- b. Symbol - the covenant: the exchange of promises between the man and woman reflect the covenant between Jesus and the Church
- c. Minister - the baptized man and woman
- d. Witnesses
  - 1) The priest
  - 2) The assembly of believers - only two witnesses necessary
- e. Usually celebrated during the Eucharistic Liturgy

## II. MARY

### A. DAYS TO HONOR MARY

#### **December 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**

Under the title of the Immaculate Conception, Mary is revered as the patroness of the United States and of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In 1854, Pope Pius IX declared: "From the first moment of her conception, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,

by a unique grace and privilege of God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved from all stain of Original Sin.” (CCC #490-91)

**December 12                    Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, a poor Mexican Indian, on December 9, 1531. Mary told Juan to build a Church. Juan went to the Bishop to tell him the Lady’s request. The bishop did not believe him. Three days later, when Juan again went to the bishop and opened his cloak to give to the Bishop roses which the Lady had arranged in Juan’s cloak, there was a picture of Mary on his cloak. The Bishop believed and built a church in honor of Mary. We honor Our Lady of Guadalupe because we recognize her concern for all people especially the suffering and the poor. December 9 is the feast of Saint Juan Diego.

**January 1                        Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**

This feast of Mary is considered to be one of the oldest and most important feasts of Our Lady. In 431, the Council of Ephesus met to correct false teachings about Christ’s divinity. The Council affirmed that Jesus is true God and true man. Since Mary is the Mother of Jesus, who is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, she can truly be called the Mother of God. Devotion to Mary as the Mother of God continued to spread from this time to the present.

**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.

**III. LITURGICAL YEAR**

(1168-73)

- A. SUNDAY - the Lord’s day is the day on which we celebrate Jesus Resurrection.

(2177)



It is the heart of the Church's life.

- B. CHRISTMAS (525-30)
1. Liturgical Color is white: joy, glory, innocence
  2. Story of Jesus' Birth Mt. 1:18- 2-23,  
Lk. 2: 1-20
- C. 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
- D. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

**December 27: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist**

John, the brother of James, was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He and his brother were disciples of John the Baptist, but Jesus called them to follow Him with Peter and Andrew. Jesus, while dying on the cross, told John to look after Mary His mother. He was called “the beloved disciple.” John is given credit for writing the Gospel of John, three Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. Tradition tells us that he was the only Apostle who died peacefully of old age, in the year 100.

**January 31: St. John Bosco, Priest**

St. John Bosco came from a family of poor farmhands in Italy, born in 1815. His father died when he was two and he was raised by his pious mother. Because of the good influence of his mother and his parish priest, in addition to a series of dreams he had, St. John believed he was called to the priesthood. He believed that by being humble, kind and gentle like St. Francis de Sales he could be an example to others. He was ordained in 1841. In Turin, he saw many of the poor boys who came to work in the factories become homeless and wild. He began to shelter some of them, and

eventually this grew into the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales and was home to nearly 800 boys. Through his ministry with boys, St. John Bosco and his Salesian Order helped change ideas about how to educate children, always emphasizing their dignity and their right to know that they are loved. St. John Bosco died in 1888.

- IV. PRAYER** (2590)
- A. TRADITIONAL
- Morning Offering (2698)
- B. SPONTANEOUS (2643-44)  
Encourage students to be familiar and comfortable with these types of prayer
1. Prayer of petition (2629, 2633, 2647)
  2. Prayer of thanks (2637-2638)
  3. Prayer asking for forgiveness (2631)
  4. Prayer of praise (2639-49)
  5. Aspirations
    - a. Short prayer invoking the name or title of a saint
    - b. Common response: pray for us.
    - c. Example: *St. John Bosco, pray for us.*
- C. REVIEW PRAYERS OF THE MASS
- D. STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**V. 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 Theme:*

Call to Family, Community and Participation

*Catholic tradition insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation.*

*Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions*, USCC, 1998, p. 6

For further ideas see From the Ground Up: Teaching Catholic Social Principles in Elementary Schools, NCEA, 1999.

# *Third Trimester*

- I. **GOD'S LAW** (2055)
  - A. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (2056-60)
    - 1. Present the Ten Commandments as given by God to Moses as a covenant with his people.
    - 2. Scripture story of God and Moses Ex. 19:16-25; 20:1-21

- 3. First three commandments express our fundamental duties to God. (2134, 2161, 2165-66, 2190-92)
- 4. Other commandments express our fundamental duties to our neighbor. (2248, 2319, 2393,2454, 2508,2531,2553)
- B. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT OF LOVE (2055)
  - 1. Given by Jesus Mt. 22:37-40
  - 2. The Ten Commandments can be interpreted in light of the great commandment of love.

## II. CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

- A. BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH
  - 1. Life of Jesus
  - 2. Birthday of the Church - Pentecost (Acts 2:1-24, 37-41)
  - 3. Early Church community (Acts 2:42-47)
- B. COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH TODAY
  - 1. Church as Family
  - 2. Church as Parish
  - 3. Church as Diocese
  - 4. The Universal Church
  - 5. The Communion of Saints (946-53)
- C. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH (811)
  - 1. The Church is *ONE*. (866)
  - 2. The Church is *HOLY*. (867)
  - 3. The Church is *CATHOLIC*. (868)

4. The Church is *APOSTOLIC*. (869)

D. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1. Sacraments of Initiation: (1212)  
*Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist*

2. As baptized disciples of Jesus we are of service to the Church by Mt. 28:19-20

a. Living the Good News

b. Spreading the Good News

c. Celebrating the Good News

III. MARY

A. MAY DEVOTIONS - Special prayers and activities to honor Mary

1. Traditional color is light blue

2. May Shrine

B. DAYS TO HONOR MARY

**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 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)

#### IV. LITURGICAL YEAR

##### A. HOLY WEEK

1. Palm Sunday Jn. 12:12-19
  
2. Triduum
  - a. Holy Thursday Mt. 26:26-35,  
Mk. 14:22-31,  
Lk. 22:14-23  
Mass of the Lord's Supper
  
  - 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

##### B. 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,  
Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20:1-10  
for glory, joy, innocence
  
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 for Acts 2:1-4  
the Holy Spirit

##### C. OTHER CELEBRATIONS

1. Trinity Sunday - Sunday after Pentecost

2. Corpus Christi - Sunday after Trinity Sunday

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

E. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

**March 3: St. Katherine 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 25: St. Mark the Evangelist**

St. Mark was one of the early disciples of Jesus and the author of the Gospel of Mark. In the first years after the Ascension of Jesus, Mark traveled to Rome with the apostle Peter as an interpreter and wrote down many of Peter's sermons. This formed the basis of Mark's gospel, which he wrote in Greek in order to convert the Gentiles to Christianity. Later, in 49, St. Mark went to North Africa and founded the Church of Alexandria. He became the first bishop there and is considered the founder of Christianity in Africa. In art, St. Mark is symbolized by a winged lion. While we do not know when he died, St. Mark is believed to have been martyred near Alexandria.

**April 29: St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor**

Catherine Benincasa was born into an enormous family of twenty-five children. She was born in 1347 in Siena, Italy and had a vision of Jesus when she was just five years old. By the time she was seven, she made a vow of chastity. However, when she was sixteen, Catherine's parents wished her to marry. She refused, cut off her

hair, and began a severe fast. Her parents relented and allowed her to become a Third Order Dominican. She had many visions of Jesus and began to gain attention. She used this attention to call for a reform of the clergy, for peace between neighboring communities, and eventually to help return the pope to Rome. Catherine wrote letters to public figures constantly, 300 of which have survived. She fasted to the point where she only consumed the Eucharist and continued to have mystical experiences. In 1380, when she was thirty-three, she suffered a stroke and died in Rome.

G. HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION (2043, 2177, 2180)

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| January 1            | Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God   |
| 40 Days after Easter | Ascension Thursday                     |
| August 15            | Solemnity of the Assumption            |
| November 1           | Solemnity of All Saints                |
| December 8           | Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception |
| December 25          | Solemnity of Christmas                 |

H. LITURGICAL COLORS

1. Green Ordinary Time for hope
2. Red Pentecost, feasts of martyrs, Palm Sunday, Good Friday
3. Purple Lent and Advent for penitence
4. White (gold) Christmas and Easter for joy

V. 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

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

A. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Practice acts of kindness and forgiveness towards family members.
2. Participate in parish Lenten Programs

# *Prayer*

## **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.  
Breathe in. **PAUSE**. Breathe 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:

1. How would you feel if you had been at the Last Supper?
2. How do you think Jesus felt when His friends, the apostles, all walked away from Him?
3. 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 to 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. 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 prepared, 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 are 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*.