

## *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 is 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 BIBLE**

### **A. DEFINITION**

(81-82)

Collection of sacred writings

1. Inspired word of God

2 Tim. 3:16-17

2. A source of Revelation

(NCD #48-61, (DV #1-10)

### **B. HOW TO USE THE BIBLE**

1. Name of book or Bible

2. Chapter number

3. Verse number

4. Title of story

5. Parallel passages

6. Cross references

### **C. STRUCTURE**

1. Old Testament

(702)

a. Total number of books

(46 books)

b. Divisions

1) The Torah/ Pentateuch  
(The Law of Moses)

(5 books)

2) The Historical Books

(16 books)

- 3) The Wisdom Books ( 7 books)
- 4) The Prophetic Books (18 books)
- 2. New Testament (124-26)
  - a. Total number of books (27 books)
  - b. Divisions
    - 1) The Gospels (4)
    - 2) The Acts of the Apostles
    - 3) The Letters / Epistles (21 letters)
      - a) Paul's Letters (13 letters)
      - b) The Catholic Letters ( 7 letters)
      - c) The Letter to the Hebrews
    - 4) The Book of Revelation / Apocalypse

**D. IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLE**

- 1. God communicates with us and reveals himself to us. (DV #2)
- 2. There is a natural desire for God in every human heart. (26-49)
- 3. Human beings have the capacity to hear God speaking to them.
- 4. Inspired Word of God (DV #11)
- 5. Root of our Christian faith (DV Ch. 4)
- 6. Covenant relationship Lk. 1:68-79, Gal. 4:4-7
- 7. Source of prayer (DV #2)

**II. OLD TESTAMENT**

**A. LITERARY GENRE**

- 1. Definition
- 2. Types
  - a. Birth Announcement

b. Call Narrative

c. Covenant Narrative

3. Interpreting Sacred Scripture (115-19)

a. Literal sense

b. Spiritual sense

**B. MAJOR EVENTS**

1. Creation Gn. 1, 2, (DV #3), (337-49)

2. Humanity's sinful response to God

a. The Fall of Adam and Eve  
Original Sin and its effects Gn. 3, GS #13, 17, (385-90, 396-409, 415-19)

b. Cain and Abel Gn. 4

c. Sin in Noah's Time Gn. 6-9

d. Tower of Babel Gn. 11:1-9

3. God's Response Gn. 5-8

a. Characteristics

1) Justice Sir. 35:17

2) Mercy and love Ps. 51:1, Lam. 3:22-23

b. Promise of Redemption Gn. 3:15, (DV #14-16)

c. Choosing a Special People: Israel  
Our Ancestors in Faith Gn. 12-50

1) Abraham and Sarah

a) Call Gn. 12:1-3, (59, 72, 762)

b) Response in faith Gn. 12, Heb. 11:9-20

c) New name Gn. 17:5

d) Covenant Gn. 15, (762, 1222)

e) Promise of a Son Gn. 16, 17

- f) Sacrifice of the Son Gn. 22
- 2) Isaac and Rebekah Gn. 24
  - a) People of faith
  - b) Covenant renewed Sir. 44:22-23
  - c) Parents of Esau and Jacob Gn. 25:19-26
  - d) Blessing of the sons Gn. 27:26-40
- 3) Jacob, Leah and Rachel (2573)
  - a) Esau, firstborn Gn. 25:19-26
  - b) Sells birthright Gn. 25:27-34
  - c) Jacob obtains blessing Gn. 27:1-40
  - d) New name (Israel) Gn. 32:23-33
  - e) Father of 12 sons Gn. 35:23-29
- 4) Joseph and his brothers Gn. 37:1-11
  - a) Joseph - the favorite son Gn. 37:3
  - b) Joseph sold into slavery Gn. 37:12-36
  - c) Joseph - interpreter of dreams Gn. 40:1-41
  - d) Governor of Egypt Gn. 41:37-50
  - e) Blessing of Jacob Gn. 49:22-26

### III. LITURGICAL YEAR

(1163-73, 1194)

#### A. DEFINITION

The cycle of feasts and seasons celebrating the events of the life of Jesus Christ and his presence in the Church.

#### B. SUNDAY

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

#### C. 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

D. ADVENT (524)

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 Christ, Christmas
  - a. Prayers and Scripture readings emphasize the coming of Jesus Christ
  - b. First part of Advent focuses on his Second Coming at the end of time
  - c. Second part of Advent focuses on his coming into human history in Bethlehem
4. Advent symbols
  - a. Advent Wreath
  - b. Jesse Tree

E. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE (1173)

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 minor 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 30: Memorial of St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor**

Jerome was a man of extremes. His real name was Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius. He was born around 345 A.D. in the area of present day Yugoslavia. His Christian family was able to send him to Rome at the age of twelve for a good education. There he excelled in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. After a period of time in the desert, he was ordained a priest. He spent much time counseling his friends in the spiritual life. Later, Pope Damasas, realizing his talents, commissioned Jerome to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. His translation was called the Vulgate. The Vulgate became the official biblical text of the Catholic Church.

**October 15: St. Teresa of Avila, Virgin and Doctor**

St. Teresa was born into a rich Spanish family in 1515. When she was fourteen, her mother died and her father sent her to be educated by the Augustinian Sisters. She eventually decided to enter the Carmelites. Her early years were marked by illness and migraines, and she often found it difficult to pray. Years later she received help from two deeply spiritual persons, St. Francis Borgia and St. Peter Alcantara. Through their encouragement, she made great progress in her prayer life and began to experience ecstatic visions. After this period, she led a reform of her Carmelite order because she felt the spiritual life of the order was hurting. She traveled throughout Spain and reformed many religious houses, aided by St. John of the Cross. Teresa wrote extensively, including the great work of mystical spiritualism, *Interior Castle*. She died in 1582 and was named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Paul VI in 1970.

**October 17: St. Margaret Mary Alacoque**

Margaret Mary was born in 1647 into a well-known family in Burgundy, France. Desiring to dedicate her life to the service of God, she entered the Visitation Convent at Paray-Le-Monial at the age of twenty-two. She had a great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As a gift from Jesus, she received private revelations from him. Through her intercession, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus spread throughout Europe. In 1765, this devotion to the Sacred Heart was approved for liturgical observance by the Pope.

*Jesus' message was, "See this heart which has loved so much and received so little love in return ... tell everyone that I really love them and I want to be loved in return. If you love me, pray and sacrifice for those who do not believe in my love or do not care about my love."*

#### IV. MARY

##### A. Dogmas believed

1. The Immaculate Conception (490-94)
2. Mary's Divine Motherhood (495)
3. The Virgin Birth (496, 499, 510)
4. The Assumption (966, 974)

##### B. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY (1172)

##### **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)

##### **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.



- b. Other forms (See pages 29-36)
  - 1) The “Jesus Prayer”
  - 2) Praying in Common (Choral Speech)
  - 3) Song and Gesture
  - 4) Meditation
  - 5) Aspirations

C. PURPOSE OF PRAYER

- 1. Adoration (2626-28, 2639)
- 2. Thanksgiving (2637-38)
- 3. Petition (2629-36)
- 4. Contrition (2631, 2850-54)

VI. SACRAMENTALS

- A. Definition (1677)
- B. Kinds (1671-73)

VII. 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**

Grade 6

- A. AWARENESS OF THE BASIC DIGNITY OF EACH PERSON
  - 1. Discuss appropriate ways to show respect for life in all its stages.
  - 2. Discuss ways to peacefully resolve peer conflicts.
  - 3. Celebrate birthdays and cultural and ethnic heritage.
  - 4. Discuss ways to show respect for all members of a family.
  
- B. RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS
  - 1. Participate in parish and/or school collections:  
    food, clothing, toys, etc.
  
  - 2. Connect with Archdiocesan Social Service Agencies

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

# *Second Trimester*

## **I. OLD TESTAMENT**

### **A. MAJOR EVENTS (continued)**

#### **1. God's Response**

##### **a. Moses, Exodus, and the Covenant**

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1) Early life  | Ex. 2                    |
| a) Oppression of Israelites                          | Ex. 1:8-22               |
| b) Love and care of Moses' mother                    | Ex. 2:1-10               |
| 2) Leader of Israel                                  |                          |
| a) God's call  | Ex. 3:2-6, Sir. 45:1-5   |
| b) God's plan for Moses                              | Ex. 3:7-10               |
| c) Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh                    | Ex. 5, 6:28 - 7:7        |
| d) Conflict with Pharaoh                             | Ex. 5 - 11               |
| e) Passover Ritual                                   | Ex. 12:1-29, Heb. 11:28  |
| f) Departure/Exodus from Egypt                       | Ex. 12:30-38             |
| g) Crossing of the Red Sea                           | Ex. 14:10-22             |
| h) God provides for his people (the manna and quail) | Ex. 16:1-36              |
| i) Meeting with God at Mt. Sinai                     | Ex. 19                   |
| j) The Ten Commandments                              | Ex. 20-23                |
| k) The Covenant is sealed                            | Ex. 24:1-11              |
| l) Forty Years Wandering in the Desert               |                          |
| (1) The Tent of Meeting                              | Ex. 25:1-6; 40:1-5,34-38 |
| (2) The Ark of the Covenant                          | Ex. 25:10-16             |
| m) Death of Moses                                    | Dt. 34:5-7               |

B. MAJOR PERSONS AND EVENTS

1. Joshua

- a. Successor to Moses  
    laying on of hands Nm. 27:18-23, Sir. 46:1
- b. Entered Promised Land (Canaan) Jos. 1:1-5,12
- c. Unified the people Jos. 1:10-18
- d. Destroyed Jericho Jos. 6:1-27
- e. Conquered Canaan Jos. 10-12
- f. Covenant at Shechem Jos. 24:1-28
- g. Death Jos. 24:29-30
- h. Personal qualities
  - 1) Courageous Nm. 14:6-10
  - 2) Prophetic Jos. 6:26-27
  - 3) Religious leader Jos. 2:7

2. Judges of Israel

- a. Characteristics of the era
  - 1) No central authority Jgs. 17:6, 21:25
  - 2) Spiritual decline Jgs. 2:16-18, 18:1-31
  - 3) Pattern of lifestyles of Israelites in Canaan
    - a) Infidelity
    - b) Punishment
    - c) Repentance
    - d) Deliverance
- b. The Judges
  - 1) Charismatic leaders
  - 2) Ruled around 1250 B.C. to 1020 B.C.
  - 3) Names
    - a) Deborah & Barak Jgs. 4:4-9
    - b) Gideon Jgs. 6:11-40
    - c) Samson Jgs. 15:20

d) Samuel 1 Sm. 7:15

c. Major Judges

1) Deborah

- a) Prophetess and judge Jgs. 4:4-14
- b) Song of triumph Jgs. 5:1-31
- c) Woman of trust

2) Gideon

- a) Man of faith Heb. 11:32
- b) Defeated Midianites Jgs. 7-8:28

3) Samson

- a) Man of contrasts: Jgs. 15:1-18
  - obedient-victorious/
  - disobedient-defeated;
  - physically strong/
  - morally weak

b) Loss of strength Jgs. 16:3-12

Samson and Delilah Jgs. 16:4-31

c) Death of Samson Jgs. 16:23-31

4) Samuel

a) Dedicated to God 1 Sm. 1:11-22

b) Prophet, priest, and judge 1 Sm. 3:20-21, Sir. 46:13

c) Last and greatest judge 1 Sm. 3,4,7

d) God's revelation to Samuel 1 Sm. 3:7-18

e) People demand a king 1 Sm. 8

3. Kings of Israel

a. Saul

1) First king of Israel 1 Sm. 9:1-2

2) Anointed as ruler 1 Sm. 10:1-16

3) Battles the Philistines 1 Sm. 17:1-58

4) Jealous of David 1 Sm. 18:6-13

5) Death of Saul 1 Sm. 31:1-6

b. David

1) Early life

a) Son of Jesse Ruth 4:17

b) Chosen by God,  
Anointed by Samuel 1 Sm. 16:1-13, Sir. 47:2

- 2) Life under Saul
    - a) Harpist 1 Sm. 16:14-23
    - b) Kills Goliath 1 Sm. 17:4-49, Sir. 47:4
    - c) Subdues Philistines 1 Sm. 17:32-54
  - 3) King of Israel
    - a) Anointed king 2 Sm. 5:1-5
    - b) Strengthens kingdom 2 Sm. 5:11-16
    - c) Organizes worship 1Chr. 15:1-29
    - d) Blesses people 2 Sm. 6:17-19
    - e) Receives eternal covenant 2 Sm. 7:1-19
    - f) Subdues many nations 2 Sm. 8:1-18, 10:1-9
    - g) Commits adultery and is rebuked by Nathan 2 Sm. 11:1-27, 12:1-15
    - h) Repents Ps. 32:1-11, Ps. 51:1-19
    - i) Secures Solomon's succession 1 Kgs. 1:5-53
    - j) Reigns for forty years 1 Kgs. 2:11
    - k) Steadfastly loyal to God 1 Mc. 2:57
  - 4) David's spiritual significance
    - a) Prophet Acts 2:29-30
    - b) Musician 2 Sm. 23:1
    - c) From his family the Savior would come. "Son of David" - Jesus Christ Mk. 11:10, Acts 15:16
    - d) Faith Heb. 11:32-33
    - e) Covenant 2 Sm. 7:4-17
- c. Solomon
- 1) Life
    - a) David and Bathsheba's son 2 Sm. 12:24, Sir. 47:12
    - b) Significance of name 1 Chr. 22:9
    - c) Anointed by Nathan 1 Kgs. 1:33-34
    - d) Received instruction from David 1 Kgs. 2:1-10
    - e) Prayer for wisdom 1 Kgs. 3:1-15
    - f) Organized kingdom 1 Kgs. 4:1-28
    - g) Built temple 1 Kgs. 5-6
    - h) Dedicated temple 1 Kgs. 8:22-66
    - i) Falls into polygamy and idolatry 1 Kgs. 11:1-3, Sir. 47:19

- 2) Solomon's strengths
  - a) Chose an understanding heart 1 Kgs. 3:5-9
  - b) Exhibited sound judgment 1 Kgs. 3:16-28
  - c) Excelled in wisdom 1 Kgs. 4:29-34
  - d) Great writer 1 Kgs. 4:32
  - e) Reigned without war Sir. 47:12
- 3) Solomon's weaknesses
  - a) Love of luxury Eccl. 2:1-11
  - b) Married pagans 1 Kgs. 11:1-3
  - c) Idolatry 1 Kgs. 11:4-8
  - d) Actions divided nation Sir. 47:21
- 4) Solomon's death 1 Kgs. 11:41-43

**II. LITURGICAL YEAR** (1163-73, 1194)

**A. CHRISTMAS**

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

**B. LENT**

- 1. Time of preparation for Easter, forty days
- 2. From Ash Wednesday to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
- 3. Liturgical color is purple for penance, repentance

**C. 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: Liturgical color is red  
for the blood of Jesus shed for us.  
Celebration of the Lord's Passion  
1) Part 1: Liturgy of the Word

*Special General Intercessions*

- 2) Part 2: Veneration of the Cross
- 3) Part 3: Holy Communion

c. Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil

- 1) Part 1: The Service of Light
- 2) Part 2: Liturgy of the Word

Nine readings are provided for this special Vigil

- 3) Part 3: Liturgy of Baptism
- 4) Part 4: Liturgy of the Eucharist

d. Easter

D. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

(1173)

**November 30: Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle**

St. Andrew was one of the Twelve Apostles and the brother of St. Peter. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus sees Andrew and Peter (called Simon) fishing and calls out to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:18-20). In the Gospels of John, we are told that Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. When John pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God," Andrew left John to follow Jesus (John 1:35-40). However, we know very little about his life in the early Church. It is commonly believed that he preached the Gospels in Greece and Turkey and was crucified at Patras. The Christmas Anticipation Prayer begins on the Feast of Saint Andrew.

**December 3: St. Francis Xavier**

St. Francis Xavier was born in Spain in 1506. A student of St. Ignatius Loyola, he and St. Ignatius co-founded the Society of Jesus, known as the Jesuits, in 1534. They desired to send out missionaries all over the world. St. Francis spent much of the rest of his life founding missions in Asia, especially in India. His work throughout India, Japan and Malaysia was very hard since he lived amongst the poor and ministered to the sick. He died on an island near Hong Kong in 1552.

**December 26: St. Stephen, First Martyr**

Stephen, Protomartyr (New Testament), was a Jew raised beyond the area of Palestine. His life was influenced by Greek culture. His name in Greek means "crown." Stephen was one of the seven men designed for special tasks in the Acts of

the Apostles. (Acts 6:1-6) Like Jesus, the deacon Stephen was accused of blasphemy. This young deacon delivered an eloquent speech in defense of Christian beliefs. As a result, he angered the Jews. He was condemned to death by stoning. St. Stephen is the first martyr recorded in the New Testament.

**January 4: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton**

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born in 1774 in New York. She was raised in the Episcopal Church, and after her mother died she was influenced greatly by the charitable works of her step-mother. When she was 19, she married a wealthy businessman named William Seton. They had five children. Inspired by St. Vincent de Paul, she founded a ladies group committed to charity towards the poor. When her husband became sick in 1803, they traveled to Italy to see doctors. After his death, she became a Catholic in 1805 because of the influence of the Italian family with whom she stayed. Elizabeth Ann Seton opened a school in Baltimore, the first Catholic school in America, and started a community of sisters called the Sisters of Charity. She died in 1821 and was canonized in 1975. She was the first native-born North American to be raised to sainthood.

**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.

**III. MARY**

A. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY (1172)

**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. She is the patroness of the Americas.

**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 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.

**B. PRAYERS**

1. The *Hail Mary*
2. The *Hail Holy Queen*
3. The *Rosary*
4. The *Memorare*
5. The *Angelus / Regina Coeli*
6. The *Magnificat*

**C. BIBLICAL PLACES AND MARY**

1. Ain-Karim
  - a. Church of the Visitation
  - b. Church of the Birth of St. John the Baptist
2. Bethlehem
3. Jerusalem

**IV. PRAYER**

**A. DEFINITION**

Mt. 7:7-11 (2590-91,  
2594-96)

**B. KINDS**

1. Communal Lk. 11:39,41-42
  - a. Sacramental celebrations Lk. 22:40-46
  - b. Liturgy of the Hours
    - 1) Purpose (1174)
    - 2) Content (1176)
2. Private, personal Ps. 51, Mk. 6:46
  - a. Devotions Ps. 121
    - 1) Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass
      - a) Visits to the Blessed Sacrament
      - b) Benediction
      - c) Forty Hours
    - 2) The Stations of the Cross
    - 3) The Rosary
    - 4) Novenas
  - b. Other Forms (See pages 29-36)
    - 1) Shared Prayer
    - 2) Guided Meditation
    - 3) Journal Keeping

## 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**

**Care for God’s Creation**

A. AWARENESS OF THOSE WHO SUFFER

1. Participate in Lenten parish / school programs.
2. Discuss the ways injustice among human families hurts everyone.
3. Discuss the problems people from other cultures face as compared to the ones they face.

B. AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK

1. Discuss laws and organizations that help create safe working conditions.
2. Discuss purposes of boycotting companies and products.
3. Determine ways students can become better stewards of God's earth.

# *Third Trimester*

## **I. OLD TESTAMENT**

### **A. MAJOR PERSONS AND EVENTS**

#### 1. Important Queens

- a. Esther Est. 2:15-18, 4C:12-30
- b. Queen of Sheba 1Kgs. 10, 2 Chr. 9

#### 2. Prophets

- a. Definition (64, 218)  
Spokesperson for God
- b. Divisions
  - 1) Major prophets
    - a) Isaiah, Is. 7:14; 9:5-6;11:1-5;  
Prophet of the Messiah 29:18-21
    - b) Jeremiah, Jer. 1:4-10;18:1-6,31:31-34  
Prophet of the New Covenant
    - c) Ezekiel, Ez. 36, 37  
Prophet in Babylon During the Exile
  - 2) Minor prophets
    - a) Amos Am. 2:6-8,13-16; 3:1-2;  
Prophet of Social Justice 5:21-24
    - b) Hosea, Hos. 2:14-17, 19-23;  
Prophet of the Faithful God 11:1-4, 8-11
    - c) Micah, Mi. 2:1-13; 4:1-12; 5:1;6:8  
Prophet of Social Justice

#### 3. Biblical Women

- a. Ruth and Naomi Ruth 1:16  
Devoted daughter-in-law

- b. Tamar  
Life preserved  
Gn. 38:25, Ru 4:12
- c. Rahab  
Proclaimed power of God  
Jos. 2, 6:20-25
- d. Hannah  
Dedicated son to God  
1 Sm. 1- 2:11, 18-21

## II. CHRIST FULFILLS THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
Lk. 3:1-22, (719)  
Bridge between the Old and New Testament
- B. JESUS CHRIST  
Fulfillment of Old Testament Promises  
Mt. 1:1-17
  - 1. Incarnation  
Lk. 1:26-38, (464, 470)
  - 2. Baptism and Public Life  
Mk. 1:1-11, Lk. 4:16-21, (535-36, 556-565)
  - 3. Redemption accomplished by Passion, Death, and Resurrection  
Mk. 15:39, Jn. 20:11-18 (619, 623)
  - 4. Established Church and ascended to his Father  
Acts 1:1-11; 2:1-12, (659-72)

## III. LITURGICAL YEAR (1168-71)

- A. EASTER SEASON (1168-69)

Sunset of Easter Sunday to sunset of the Solemnity of Pentecost

- 1. Easter Sunday: liturgical color is white for glory, joy, innocence  
Mt. 28:1-15, Mk. 16:1-8, Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20:1-10

2. Ascension Thursday: liturgical color is white  
Marks the end of Jesus' earthly appearances  
Mt. 28:16-20  
Mk. 16:19-20  
Lk. 24:50-53, Acts 1:6-12
3. Pentecost: liturgical color is red  
for the Holy Spirit  
Acts 2:1-4
  - a. Fifty days after Easter
  - b. The birthday of the Church

**B. 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

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

**D. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE**

**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.

**July 26: Ss. Anne and Joachim**

Tradition tells us that Anne and Joachim were the parents of Mary. Although never mentioned by name in any of the gospels, many legends tell the story of how Anne and Joachim were childless for many years. After prayer and penance, an angel

appeared and promised them a child. In return, they promised to dedicate this child to God. Although we may never know any historical facts about Anne and Joachim, we know that Mary was raised to be pure, full of grace, and a dedicated mother and wife. Her parents must have given her a strong example of love and faith, and it is for this reason that we know they are worthy of honor of being called the patron saints of mothers and fathers.

**August 30: St. Jeanne Jugan**

Sometimes called Sister Mary of the Cross, St. Jeanne Jugan was a French nun and founder of the Little Sisters of the Poor. She grew up during the French Revolution, a time when the Catholic faith was outlawed. Her mother secretly instructed her children in the catechism and Jeanne became a maid in the house of a devout Christian noble-woman. In 1817, Jeanne entered the Third Order of St. John Eudes as a laywoman. She worked as a nurse and again as a servant, always joyful and humble in the face of menial work. In 1839, Jeanne took in an elderly blind woman and cared for her in her own home. By 1841, she had taken in so many elderly people that she needed to rent space in a nearby convent. This was the beginning of the Little Sisters of the Poor, dedicated to caring for abandoned elderly women. St. Jeanne went door to door and begged for money and food to give to these women. Although a priest refused to allow St. Jeanne to head up the order, a later investigation revealed her role in founding the community. Soon, more communities were founded throughout France. At the time of her death in 1879, there were 2,500 Little Sisters in Europe and North America.

**IV. MARY**

**A. DAYS IN HONOR OF 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.

**April 26: Our Lady of Good Counsel**

The Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel began with an icon of Mary found in an Augustinian church in Genazzano, Italy in 1467. The icon, painted on a sheet of incredibly thin plaster, appeared to be suspended in mid-air. Devotion to this image

of Our Lady of Good Counsel grew, and many miracles were reported. By 1753, Pope Benedict XIV approved the veneration for the faithful, called the Pious Union of Our Lady of Good Counsel. In 1893, Pope Leo XIII sanctioned the use of the White Scapular of Our Lady of Good Counsel for the faithful. Pope Pius XII dedicated his pontificate to the care of Our Lady of Good Counsel in 1939. This devotion has spread widely throughout the United States.

**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)

**July 16                      Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel**

Mount Carmel is located on the coast of Israel, north of the city of Haifa. This was the place where the prophet Elijah confronted the pagan prophets of Baal. Around 1154, the Order of Mt. Carmel was founded at this ancient shrine. This contemplative order, called Carmelites, began to celebrate its patronal feast on July 16. According to the tradition of the order, on that day in 1251, Mary appeared to St. Simon Stock, a Carmelite in England. She gave him the brown scapular as a sign of her love and protection. A full scapular is a long piece of cloth worn over a religious habit. Today a scapular may be a medal or two pieces of cloth connected by a cord. Carmelites and others who wear the scapular honor the Blessed Mother by wearing it.

C. PRAYER

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

**V. PRAYER**

**A. SOURCES OF PRAYER**

1. The Word of God (2653-54)
2. The Liturgy of the Church (2655)
3. The Theological Virtues (2656-58)

**VI. SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Review of First and Second Trimesters.

**HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION**

In the United States, there are six holydays

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

# *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 its effectiveness.
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.

Grade 6

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?

Grade 6

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*.