

## *Religion Guidelines*

### **Archdiocese of Philadelphia**

These Religion Guidelines are those published in 2000; reformatted into trimesters in 2006; revised in 2012, 2013 and 2022. 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. GOD THE FATHER**

- A. FIRST PERSON OF THE TRINITY (238-40)
- B. CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH Gn. 1:1-25

## **II. CREATION (337)**

- A. CREATION OF THE WORLD Gn. 1:1-25 (275, 295)
- B. CREATION OF PEOPLE Gn. 1:25-31, 2:1-25
- C. HUMAN BEINGS HAVE A UNIQUE PLACE IN CREATION
  - 1. God created human beings in his own image. Gn. 1:27, (355, 1700, 1702)
  - 2. God created them male and female.
  - 3. God created people to know, love, and serve him. (51, 356, 357, 1719-21, 1726)
- D. SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE (2258)
  - 1. Respect for ourselves
  - 2. Respect for others
  - 3. Respect for all life

## **III. MARY**



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

C. ADVENT (524)

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

D. CHRISTMAS

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

## V. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

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

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

*Feast:* liturgies of major importance

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

### **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 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 tried to live a quieter 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.

**November 3: St. Martin de Porres**

Martin de Porres, son of a wealthy Spaniard and a freed black woman from Panama, grew up in poverty in Lima, Peru in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Apprenticed to a barber-surgeon at a young age, he joined the Dominicans at 15 as a lay helper. He used his simple medical knowledge to care for the poor and sick. His role in the convent grew, and he eventually became a fully professed brother. He ran the infirmary, cared for animals, collected alms for the poor, and devoted his nights to lengthy prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. Endowed with many spiritual gifts, including bilocation, St. Martin was always seeking ways to show charity to others, regardless of their race. He died in 1639 and is the patron saint of African-Americans.

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

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

## **VI. PRAYER**

### **A. PRAYER**

Mt. 6:5-15, (2564,  
2697-04, 2742-45)

#### **1. Definition**

- a. Listening to God
- b. Talking to God
- c. Sometimes just being still with God

2. Traditional Prayers

- a. Sign of the Cross (2157)
- b. Our Father Mt. 6:7-15, (2792-93, 2801)
- c. Hail Mary Lk. 1:26-38
- d. Doxology (Glory be...)
- e. Simple Grace before and after meals (2698)
- f. Simple Morning Offering (2698)
- g. Angel of God
- h. Introduce the Rosary

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

- A. HOLY WATER (1238)
- B. HOLY OILS (Oil of Catechumens and Chrism) (695, 1237)
- C. CROSS / CRUCIFIX
- D. SIGN OF THE CROSS
- E. BLESSED CANDLES (697)
- F. BLESSED MEDALS
- G. ROSARY

**VIII. 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. 4

**Major Themes:**

**The Life and Dignity of the Human Person  
Call to Family, Community and Participation  
Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person  
Care for God’s Creation**

**A. AWARENESS OF THE NEEDS OF OTHERS**

1. Foster a willingness to share.
2. Participate in Thanksgiving and Christmas activities for the needy.

**B. AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO CARE FOR ALL OF CREATION**

*“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.

# *Second Trimester*

## **I. LIVING IN GOD'S WORLD**

### **A. FAMILY**

Col. 3:18-21,  
Acts 3:25, (764,  
1934-35, 2204-05)

1. All families are special.
2. We first learn about love and about God in the family.
3. We first learn to pray in the family.
4. Families are important in our world and in our Church.

### **B. CHURCH**

1. Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist make us members of the Church. (1265)
2. The Church is the people of God.
3. The parish is where God's people gather as a family to worship. (1180-81, 1198-99)

### **C. SCHOOL**

1. We learn more about God and the world in school.
2. We learn to cooperate with others in school.

### **D. COMMUNITY**

Lk. 3:11, Acts 2:42-47,  
Jas. 2:15-16, 1 Jn 1:7,  
(1803, 2447)

1. We learn to share with others in community.
  - a. Feed the hungry.
  - b. Clothe the naked.
  - c. Care for the sick.

- d. Pray for the dead.
- 2. In and with community we can try to make the world more peaceful.
  - a. Forgive others. (1850, 1871)
  - b. Practice acts of kindness.

## II. GOD THE SON: JESUS CHRIST

A. SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY (262, 663)

B. JESUS' LIFE

1. Birth and Childhood

a. Annunciation Lk. 1:26-38

- 1) Jesus - name given by angel; means "God saves"
- 2) Jesus is the Son of God; St. Joseph is his foster father

b. Nativity Mt. 1:18 - 2:15,  
Lk. 2:1-20, (525)

- 1) Birth in Bethlehem
- 2) Angels appeared to Shepherds
- 3) Visit of the Magi
- 4) Flight into Egypt

c. Life in Nazareth Lk. 2:41-52, (527-34)

- 1) Holy Family
- 2) Finding in the Temple
- 3) Hidden Life

2. Jesus' Public Life

a. Baptism by St. John the Baptist Mt. 3:13-17, Mk. 1:9-11,  
Lk. 3:21-22 (541-46)

b. Call of the apostles and the disciples Mt. 4:18-22,  
Mk. 1:16-20, Jn. 1:35-51

- c. Jesus as Messiah
- d. Jesus as miracle worker and healer Mt. 4:23-25, Mk. 2:1-12;  
Mk. 8:22-26, Lk. 8:49-56
- e. Jesus as Savior Rom. 5:6-11
- f. Jesus is Lord 1Cor. 12:3, (209)

### III. MARY

#### A. DAYS IN HONOR OF 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.

## IV. LITURGICAL YEAR

### A. SEASONS

1. Lent (1095)
  - a. Time of preparation for Easter
  - b. From Ash Wednesday to Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
  - c. Liturgical color is purple: repentance, sorrow for sin
2. Holy Week
  - a. Palm Sunday
  - b. Holy Thursday
  - c. Good Friday
  - d. Holy Saturday
3. Easter (Mt. 28:1-15, Mk. 16:1-8, Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20: 1-10)
  - a. Easter Sunday: liturgical color is white for joy, glory, innocence

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|---|--|
| b. Ascension Thursday: liturgical color is white          | Mt. 28: 16-20,<br>Mk. 16: 19-20,<br>Lk. 24: 50-53, Acts 1:6-12 |
| c. Pentecost: liturgical color is red for the Holy Spirit | Acts 2:1-4   |

## V. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

### **December 6: St. Nicholas, Bishop**

Many legends surround the life of St. Nicholas, who was a 4<sup>th</sup> century bishop in Greece. One of the most famous legends is of a poor man with three daughters. The man could not afford to help them get married, so St. Nicholas secretly threw bags of gold coins through the man's window. The third time, in order to avoid being seen by the poor man, St. Nicholas threw the bag of gold coins down the chimney. The practice of gift-giving at Christmas is inspired by the generosity St. Nicholas showed to the poor man and his daughters.

### **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.

## **VI. PRAYER**

1. Traditional
  - a. *The Way of the Cross*
  - b. *The Rosary*
2. Personal Prayer
  - a. Spontaneous prayers of praise
  - b. Spontaneous prayers of intercession
  - c. Spontaneous prayers of thanksgiving
  - d. Spontaneous prayers of sorrow
3. Various prayer expressions (*See Pages 21-28*)
  - a. The "Jesus Prayer"
  - b. Choral Speech (Praying in Common)
  - c. Song and Gesture
  - d. Meditation

## **VII. 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:**

**Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

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

**Solidarity of the Human Family**

A. AWARENESS OF THOSE WHO SUFFER HUNGER

1. Participate in the Holy Childhood Association (HCA),  
the Bishops' Relief Fund, Operation Rice Bowl

2. Encourage children to be more careful and not waste food

B. AWARENESS OF THE GOSPEL CALL TO BE PEACEMAKERS

1. At home

2. In school

3. In the community

# *Third Trimester*

## **I. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Rom. 5:1-5

### **A. THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY**

### **B. THE ONE WHO LIVES WITHIN US AND GIVES US THE GIFT OF GRACE**

Lk. 3:15-16, 21-22,  
Rom. 8:14-17,  
2 Cor. 1:21-22

1. We receive the Holy Spirit for the first time at  
Baptism.

(1265-70)

2. The Holy Spirit is the gift of God's love to us.

1 Jn. 4:7-13, (733-35)

### **C. THE ONE WHO HELPS US TO DO THE RIGHT THING**

(1827, 1939-42, 2318,  
2319, 2415-18)

1. Helps us respect ourselves

2. Helps us respect others

3. Helps us care for all creation

4. Helps us in our prayer

Rom. 8: 26-27

5. Helps us to tell the truth, to obey, to forgive

## **II. SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

### **A. BAPTISM**

Mt. 28:16-20,  
Lk. 3:21-22, Eph. 4:1-6

1. Effects

(1262-65)

a. Forgives all sin

b. We are born again as children of God.

(1213)

c. We become temples of the Holy Spirit.

2. Symbols

a. Water

(1238)

- b. Oils (Oil of Catechumens and Chrism) (695, 1237)
- c. Sign of the Cross (1235)
- d. White Garment (1243)
- e. Candle (697)

3. Words (1240)

"*Name*, I baptize you in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

4. Minister (1256)

- a. Ordinary minister - bishop, priest, deacon
- b. Case of necessity - any person who has  
the right intention

B. CONFIRMATION

- 1. The Holy Spirit gives us special strength. (1285)
- 2. Chrism signifies the Holy Spirit. (1289)

C. EUCHARIST

- 1. Sacrament of Christian Initiation (1322)
- 2. Sacrament of love and a sign of unity (1323, 1380)

III. MARY

A. DAYS THAT 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.



c. Encourage the family Rosary

#### IV. SAINTS AND HOLY PEOPLE

**March 3: St. Katharine Drexel**

St. Katharine Drexel was raised right here in Philadelphia. She was born in 1858 to an extremely wealthy family. The Drexel home was opened to the poor three days a week. From a young age, Katharine was shown what it means to be compassionate and charitable towards the poor. During a trip to Italy in 1886, Pope Leo XIII encouraged her to become a missionary and devote herself to God. She did and donated her massive inheritance to charity. In 1891, she took her first vows and established the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She worked to change racial attitudes towards African Americans and American Indians. Her nuns labored to provide education and care to these under-served communities. St. Katharine established many missions for American Indians throughout the United States. During her life, she was known for her love of the Eucharist, her work promoting equal education for all, and her desire to reach out to those on the margins of society. She died in 1955 and was canonized by Blessed Pope John Paul II in 2000.

**March 17: St. Patrick**

St. Patrick is one of the most well-known saints in the Catholic Church. He lived in Roman Britain during the 5<sup>th</sup> century. When he was sixteen, he was kidnapped and sold as a slave in Ireland. He worked as a shepherd and spent much of his captivity in prayer. He escaped after six years and made his way home. Later, he had a vision in which he was called back to Ireland to convert the pagan people. He became a bishop and began his work in Ireland. St. Patrick became known for using local customs to better explain Christian truths. Legend tells us that he used a shamrock, a sacred plant to the pagan Irish, to help explain the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. He died in 460 after converting thousands.

**July 26: Ss. Anne & 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.

## V. WORSHIP

Foster full, conscious and active participation in liturgy by becoming familiar with key phrases in the Mass

1. Entrance Song - we gather as a community ready to celebrate
2. Responsorial Psalm - the Church's response to God's WORD
3. Response to the Reading - "Thanks be to God."
4. Response to the Gospel - "Praise to you, O Lord Jesus Christ."
5. Responses - "...and with your spirit," and "Amen."
6. Become familiar with phrases from the *Creed*
7. Memorial Acclamations
  - a. "We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again."
  - b. "When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again."
  - c. "Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free."

## VI. SACRAMENTALS

- A. Blessed Ashes
- B. Palms
- C. Sign of the Cross
- D. Cross/Crucifix
- E. Paschal Candle

Grade 1

F. Blessed statues, pictures, icons

G. The Rosary

## 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