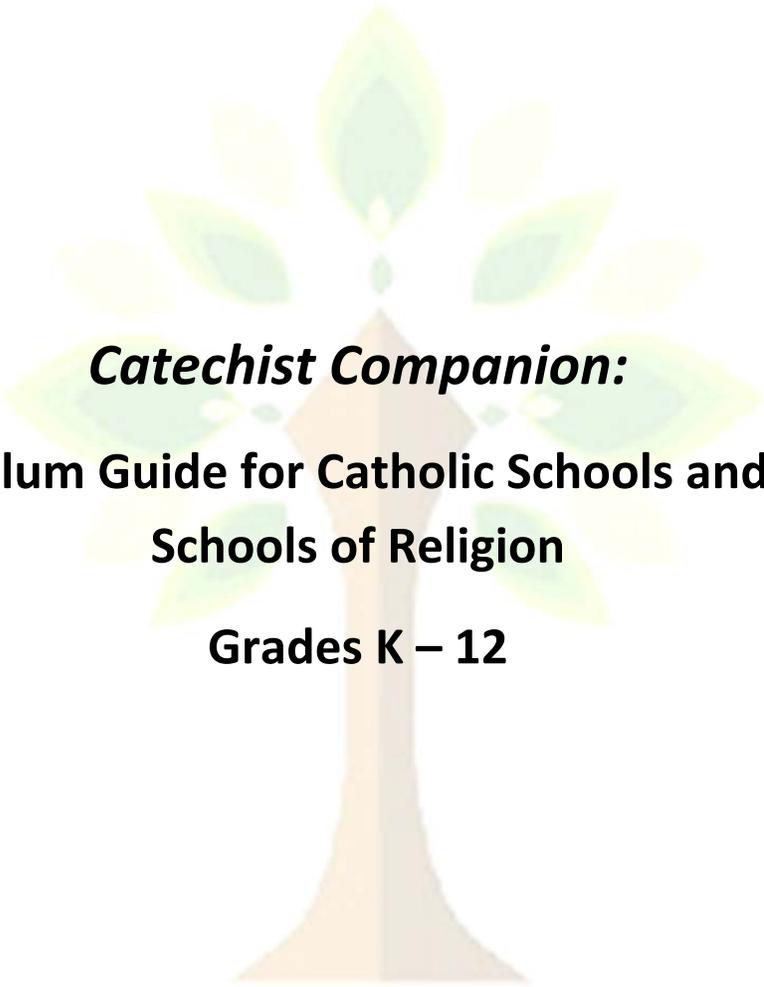




ARCHDIOCESE OF
NEW ORLEANS

Office of Religious Education



Catechist Companion:

**A Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools and Parish
Schools of Religion**

Grades K – 12

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A Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools and Parish Schools of Religion

INTRODUCTION:

The process and goal of catechesis, literally meaning “to echo,” is to lead both the catechist and student to a deeper understanding and knowledge of, and relationship with God. This is accomplished through the imparting of knowledge of our faith as well as providing opportunities for growth through prayer and liturgical experiences.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidelines for those charged with the official teaching of the Catholic Church’s doctrine, faith and traditions in our Catholic Schools and Parish Schools of Religion. These guidelines will aid in teaching the fundamental theological and pastoral principles of the Faith.

The General Directory for Catechesis (GDC) and *The National Directory for Catechesis* (NDC) emphasize what the tasks of the catechetical ministry and the catechist are:

- 1) To promote the knowledge of the Faith
- 2) To promote a knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the Sacraments
- 3) To promote moral formation in Jesus Christ
- 4) To promote prayer and how to pray
- 5) To promote living in community and participating actively in the life and mission of the Church
- 6) To promote a missionary spirit that leads God’s people to be the living presence of Christ in society

The Curriculum is divided by grade level. It uses the *Catechism of the Catholic Church’s* four pillars of catechesis:

- 1) The baptismal profession of Faith - Creed
- 2) The Celebration of the Christian Mysteries -Sacraments
- 3) The Life of Christ – Morality
- 4) Christian Prayer

Each of these pillars is developed on an age appropriate level with the ultimate goal of bringing God’s children into a closer relationship with God in order to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We have the privilege of journeying with God’s young people as they grow in the wisdom, knowledge and love of God and God’s Church. As the document *To Teach as Jesus Did* reminds us: “Within both the Christian Community and the educational ministry the mission to teach as Jesus did is a dynamic mandate for Christians of all times, places and condition (TTAJD, p. 2).

It is with hope and joy-filled prayer that this guide will aid you as the catechetical leader, catechist, student and parent in growing closer in the love of God and go out to the world and make disciples of all people!

Early Childhood / Kindergarten

Faith-Focus: God Asks Us To Care

Aware that the world is filled with special persons and things which God in His goodness has given to me, I want to show Him that I am grateful for his gifts by CARING. To show care for persons by respecting and loving them and to show care for things by using them or relating to them in the right way is a response of which a five-year-old is capable. The five-year-old moves into the larger world of relationships beyond the family-neighborhood, God's family, and persons who are helpful in his/her life (lawful civil authorities). The faith of the five-year-old is brought to deeper consciousness through being taught how to respond to God's gifts by CARING. (See CCC, #1716, #1717, #2196)

Factors in Human Development (Age 5-6)

A. Physical

Five and six-year-olds are physically very active but have less energy than three and four-year-olds. They are more mature in motor control, more balanced and poised and so find hopping and skipping more enjoyable. These little ones participate in boisterous play, use building blocks and are interested in puzzles and hand skills. Five and six-year-olds possess greater small muscle control and defined hand preference which enable them to draw and cut. They have increased competence in self-care and are capable of sitting for longer periods of time (10-15 minutes).

B. Cognitive

Children at this age are curious and eager to learn. They learn best through active involvement. They are beginning to distinguish reality from fantasy, and so can symbolize thoughts through drawings. These children have a longer attention span (10-15 minutes) and can remember and carry out two or three instructions with gradual development of listening skills. Five and six-year-olds speak without infantile articulation, can narrate a long tale, are eager to listen to stories and then creatively retell them in their own words or through dramatics, role-playing, puppetry, and/or dance. These children may talk incessantly and enjoy activities that follow for an exchange of ideas among children. They can focus on detail and are beginning to see things as a whole. They are able to plan and work on simple projects. It is good for these children to be exposed to a rich variety of human experiences with natural

symbols such as bread, water and light. Five and six-year-olds relate well to stories about families, community helpers, parish personnel and holidays. It can be very helpful for these children to draw, paint and otherwise symbolize their own experiences of relationships with people. Brief periods of silence allow these little ones to focus and internalize what has been learned. Review and repetition are necessary.

C. Affective

Five and six-year-olds need affirmation, approval and individual attention. They want to do things that other people do and seek a purpose for activity. They take great pride in work and feel a sense of accomplishment in completing a task. These children are generally self-sufficient and self-motivated. They dislike being compared to other children, and may be damaged by these comparisons. It is helpful to give individual attention to these children by using their names in a positive way, celebrating birthdays, baptisms, anniversaries, showing acceptance of questions and responses, and giving praise for accomplishments, personal appearance, etc.

D. Moral

It is important to build on the children's natural desire to please others as a first step in deepening a sense of selflessness and concern for others. Sometimes being unselfish will call for limits to one's behavior. It is good to support and encourage the children's expanding relationships as a foundation for the understanding of "neighbor" in the broadest sense and membership in a faith community. To assist the children in developing a sense of responsibility and service to others, it is helpful to rotate simple chores, role play service at home and neighborhood, and to draw attention to those in community who help us. It is important that they see clear consequences of any negative behavior. It is also important to encourage these little ones to make decisions (e.g. choosing to say I'm sorry or to help a sick friend) as a basis for developing a social and moral consequence.

E. Social

Five and six-year-olds are friendly and outgoing, certain that everyone likes them, generally happy and well adjusted. They possess a good sense of humor and like jokes and tricks. They are learning to be more cooperative in a group and prefer associative play in small groups, although they may still have some difficulty in sharing. These little ones seek affection from both children and adults. Five and six-year-olds need considerable freedom in choosing friends and need to develop a social relationship between themselves and their teacher. They also need

a positive environment. The children's social contacts have expanded to include many other persons outside the family, and they like to role-play adult situations. Occasionally plan social activities and celebrations to include other family members and friends. It is important for the teacher to be aware that some children come from diverse family situations.

F. Religious

These little ones are growing in the knowledge that "I" am a person of worth and dignity and that God made "me" and God loves "me". Five and six-year-olds need reassurance of God's love that comes through a loving, concerned, adult presence. These children are capable of knowing that God desires "my" love and is interested in "my" everyday experiences. They articulate that God not only loves "me" but wants "me" to love others. The catechist must show the parameters of behavior that take into consideration that kindergarten is "my" Church experience and that "I" am missed when "I" am not here. These children need to experience and associate God with positive, joyful occasions and celebrations in "my" life as well as with times that "I" can tell God "I" am sorry for the things I do wrong. They love to celebrate everything!

At this age, these children are developing the ability to phrase simple prayers. It is important to reassure the children through a loving environment and an adult presence that they are special individuals loved by God. Planned field trips help heighten awareness of the role of other persons in various communities—home, church, neighborhood. Children can develop an appreciation of the various groups that compose the Church by inviting guest speakers. It is good to involve children in celebrations and sharing of common meals as fundamental orientation for sharing Eucharist. This may be a good time for them to name what might keep them from a common meal or the Eucharist. Also, the use of rituals, classroom prayer, celebrations, plus sharing family traditions serve as remote preparation for active participation in the liturgy. Finally, it is also helpful to assist children in interpreting favorite stories, differentiating real from unreal, sorting out meanings as preparation for later Bible study.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences and cultural background. (ND #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Kindergarten:

Goal: To help kindergarten-aged children develop a relationship with God through knowledge and experience.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Feel they are special persons created by God.
2. Respect themselves and others because God made them.
3. Show reverence for all creations as a gift from God.
4. Learn the Bible is a special book about God and God's people.
5. Begin to develop some knowledge of the Church's liturgies and rituals.

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Identify God as Creator of all things
- Recognize Jesus as God's Son
- List examples of creation
- List ways they experience God's love
- Identify Mary as Jesus' mother
- Identify Joseph as Jesus' foster father
- Listen to stories of the saints and identify a saint as a holy person
- Identify the 3 persons of the Trinity
- Recognize heaven as a place where you will be happy with God forever
- Listen to Bible stories
- Discuss the Bible as the Word of God

II. Celebration of the Christian Mysteries:

The students will:

- Attend school Liturgies (if in Catholic school)
- Attend Sunday Liturgies with family
- Participate at Mass in an age-appropriate manner
- Participate in seasonal liturgical activities
- Tour the parish church
- Identify Baptism as a Sacrament
- Define Sacraments as an opportunity to meet Jesus and grow in relationship with Jesus
- Identify Baptism as the moment they became children of God

- Realize they became members of Christ's family through Baptism
- Identify water as a sign of God's life and an important part of Baptism
- Become familiar with the other symbols of Baptism

III. Life in Christ

The students will:

- Recognize they are made in God's image and likeness
- Recognize they are special because God made them
- Identify that the community of God includes their family, class, Church, and outside community
- Begin to show care and concern for others
- Be able to discuss the differences between right and wrong
- Realize God gives the freedom to make right choices
- Discuss obedience to parents, teachers and other legitimate authorities
- Recognize that God calls everyone to share these gifts with others
- List ways they can help others
- Identify leaders in their parish/school

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Define prayer as talking to God and listening to God
- Identify appropriate times for prayer: morning, evening, meals
- Demonstrate the ability to pray spontaneously
- Identify the rosary as a private prayer form
- Recite prayers:
 - Sign of the Cross
 - Meal time Prayers
 - Our Father
 - Hail Mary
 - Glory Be
 - Guardian Angel Prayer

First Grade

Faith-Focus: Meeting Jesus and His Father

God, our Father, loves us. God shows love for us in the gifts of life, creation, our families, our friends, and in Jesus and his Spirit. (See CCC #198-202, #240, and #243)

Factors in Human Development (Ages 6-7)

A. Physical

At this level the children's behavior is being formed. They are stronger and more controlled. They rely on concrete and repeated experiences. These little ones learn by doing, showing, and experiencing.

B. Cognitive

Six and seven-year-olds are beginning to think logically about concrete, real objects or personal experiences. They learn best by doing, showing, and experiencing. Children of this age lack the ability to focus on more than the superficial and visible aspects of events, experiences, or objects. They lack the ability to give the reasons that may have led up to a conclusion. They have an excellent ability for memorizing rhymes and musical refrains.

C. Affective

Children at this stage like, and are attracted to, whatever provides pleasant feelings and sensations. Gradually, as they become more self-conscious, they experience a growing need for self-esteem. This is satisfied through relationships with peers and, more importantly, through the praise and attention given them by parents and catechists. Success for six and seven-year-olds is largely dependent upon the reassurance and encouragement they receive from significant adults.

D. Moral

Six and seven-year-olds are primarily motivated by the fear of punishment, the hope of

reward, and the desire for social approval. During this stage, the children begin to be conscious of and adopt the moral principles of the significant adults in their lives. They do this in an uncritical way and follow these principles out of the desire to be liked and to maintain a loving relationship with these persons. Six and seven-year-olds are most likely to be motivated on a reward-or-punishment basis. Speculatively, they can be motivated through an understanding of how they will benefit by right behavior. However, their first anxiety will be whether or not they will be punished for wrong behavior. These children learn through examples related to their own experiences: acts of selfishness, impatience, fighting, non-sharing, etc. Then, development is fostered by a sense of belonging and security.

E. Social

Children at this age are basically egocentric and need help in relating with others. They possess a great capacity to receive rather than to give. These learners expect and need adults to listen to them, to notice their accomplishments, and to encourage them in their learning efforts. Their perception of the world is dominated by their own point of view. They have little ability to put themselves in another's place. Most six and seven-year-olds have little or no capacity to empathize with adults or to see adults as having any value apart from meeting their needs.

F. Religious

Six and seven-year-olds are very sensitive to the world around them and are open to spiritual realities. Spiritual development must be seen in terms of their acquiring a "sense of the sacred", a sense of awe and wonder. Six and seven-year-olds approach life with a sense of surprise, delight, and amazement. These religious attitudes are essential in acquiring a sense of God. They can be fostered best in an environment of emotional warmth and security. Such a climate frees six and seven-year-olds from any inhibiting fear which might block their natural unfolding of imagination and creative powers. Six and seven-year-olds perceive God as the invisible provider and protector. Their personal images of God are largely dependent upon relationships with parents and other significant adults.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. There should be sensitivity to the diverse background of the students while upholding the teachings of our Faith. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

First Grade:

Goals: To help children to know, to appreciate, and to love God as their loving Parent who created everything. To help to know Jesus is God's Son who reveals God to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. To help children realize we are members of Jesus' Body, the Church, through the Sacrament of Baptism. To help children become aware of our liturgical celebrations.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Continue to develop an awareness of being special and unique persons created by God
2. Continue to experience the presence of God in their everyday lives
3. Continue to realize God's love for them
4. Recognize Jesus is God's Son and Jesus shows them how to love God and each other
5. Be able to identify themselves as members of the church through the Sacrament of Baptism
6. Realize that they are to love and care for others like Jesus did
7. Recognize the Bible as the living Word of God
8. Recognize the Holy Spirit helps them love God and others

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Be able to continue to retell Bible stories
- Recognize that the readings at Mass are scriptural
- Show respect for the Bible and God's Word
- Celebrate Mary as the Mother of Jesus
- Recognize stories of famous saints
- Identify their patron saint and know simple facts about their saint
- Identify the three persons of the Trinity
- Realize God is the Creator of all things
- Identify Jesus as God's Son
- Identify the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity
- Begin to see sin as saying "no" to God
- Identify the Catholic Church as a family of believers with the Pope as the leader on earth
- Know the 2 great commandments
 - Love God
 - Love others as you love yourself
- Further develop their understanding that God wants us to be happy with Him in

heaven.

II. Celebration of the Christian Mysteries

The student will:

- Participate at Mass in an age appropriate manner
- Recognize that Jesus is present in Mass in a very special way
- Participate in seasonal liturgical rituals and activities
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior in Church
- Tour the parish church and begin to identify each area
- Define a Sacrament as an opportunity to meet Jesus and grow in our relationship with him
- Continue to recognize Baptism as the Sacrament that welcomes them into the Catholic Christian Community as a child of God
- Identify water as a sign of God's life and essential symbol of Baptism
- State that God takes away original sin in Baptism and gives us God's gift of grace
- Recognize Jesus' presence in the Eucharist

III. Life in Christ

The student will:

- Recognize that their behavior affects others
- Explore what friendships mean
- Identify that the community of God includes family, classmates, parish, and community
- Show concern and care for others
- Show appropriate behavior in their community as witnesses to Jesus
- Recognize that their behavior affects their relationship with God
- Discuss the differences between right and wrong
- Discuss respect for parents, teachers, and legitimate authority
- Realize sin is saying "no" to God
- Recognize God calls us to share our gifts with others
- Discover ways they can help others
- Identify church leaders

IV. Christian Prayer

The student will:

- Further understand prayer as talking to and listening to God
- Identify regular times for prayer: morning, evening, meal times
- Be able to continue to pray spontaneously
- Further identify the rosary as private prayer
- Share and discuss reasons why people pray
- Recite prayers

- Sign of the Cross
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Guardian Angel Prayer
- Meal time Prayer

Second Grade

Faith-Focus: Meeting Jesus in Reconciliation and Eucharist

God, our Father, sends Jesus as the great sign of love for us all. Jesus shares his love for us in the sacraments. We study the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation and Eucharist and learn more about the Eucharistic celebration, the Mass.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 7-8)

A. Physical

Seven and eight-year-olds are becoming stronger and better controlled. Their discovery of outside environments and social awareness is beginning to take shape as they grow.

B. Cognitive

Most children of this age are able to think logically about concrete, real objects or experiences they have known. They lack the ability to focus on more than the superficial and visible aspects of these objects and experiences. They learn best by doing, showing, and experiencing. Seven and eight-year-olds are not ready for interpersonal dialogue. They have difficulty seeing things from another person's point of view. Their perceptions tend to be dominated by their own viewpoints. Seven and eight-year-olds are beginning to generalize. They often set standards which are too high for themselves. This leads to disappointment if the activity proves too difficult.

C. Affective

These children remain quite dependent on parents and adults. They have a continued need for tangible expressions of acceptance, warmth, and belonging. These learners are emotionally vulnerable. Their spontaneous responses tend to be either totally positive or totally negative. They seek independence, but lack self-confidence. Seven and eight-year-olds are thoughtful persons. At times they appear withdrawn, absorbing more than they give.

D. Moral

Children at this level are authoritarian. They are content to have adults determine what is right and wrong. They recognize the “rules of the game” as objective laws not to be violated. These learners like to have some type of structure from adults. They possess an unrealistic moral judgment and are often unable to accept responsibility for their actions. They are only beginning to distinguish reality from fantasy.

E. Social

These learners are beginning to move away from a totally dependent relationship with family. Other adults are becoming important “bridges” to people outside the family. These persons provide the needed security to move out into the “world”. Relationships within their own peer groups are a “touch-and-go” situation, often inconsistent. Children at this stage find it difficult to accept group decisions when different from their own.

F. Religious

Seven and eight-year olds are nearing the stage when they will be able to stand back, reflect, and absorb. They still have a short attention span. Their spiritual needs center around a sense of wonder and rudimentary contemplations. They are gradually developing the capacity to pray on a very primary level. Opportunities for spontaneous prayer introduce them to prayer as conversation. Seven and eight-year-olds usually see God as a human figure with some of the physical limitations of human beings. They are incapable of interpreting symbolic language. Descriptive and metaphorical words are interpreted literally. Secure, trusting relationships with parents and other adults continue to build important foundations for Christian faith.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual’s physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179).

Curriculum for Catechesis

Second Grade:

Goals: To help the children continue to see the Church as their family and as the community of God's family. To help the children realize Jesus is present in the Eucharist through the bread and wine. To help them recognize they are invited to Jesus' Eucharistic table through the waters of Baptism. To help the children see the loving forgiveness of God the Father and Jesus the Son through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. The children will further realize the importance of liturgy and the role of symbols and ritual in their lives.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Know the 3 persons of the Trinity and begin to see the relationships of the Trinity as the foundation of our faith
2. Understand Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist
3. Understand God's forgiving love in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
4. Continue to love, care and respect others
5. Continue to understand the importance of prayer, liturgy and ritual in their lives
6. See themselves as part of God's family and called to love everyone

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Retell Bible stories that especially relate to the Sacraments of Eucharist, and Penance and Reconciliation
- Identify the readings at Mass as Scripture
- Identify the two sections of the Bible: Old Testament and New Testament
- Listen to and read stories of the lives of the saints, especially saints that reflect the love for Eucharist and their patron saints
- Be able to discuss Mary's and Joseph's roles in Jesus life and the life of the Church
- Define the Catholic Church as a family of believers under the Pope's leadership
- Identify the Ten Commandments as God's Law that was given to Moses
- Be able to relate the Ten Commandments to Jesus' Law of Love
- Define grace as a free gift from God that enables us to participate in God's life
- Define sin as saying "no" to God through disobedience
- Identify sin as original, venial or mortal
- Tell that the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation restores God's grace and our friendship with God

- Tell that we receive Jesus' Body and Blood in the Sacrament of Eucharist under the symbols of bread and wine
- Define salvation as being saved by God's Love

II. Celebration of the Christian Mysteries

The student will:

- Demonstrate proper behavior in Mass
- Participate more actively in Mass
- Define liturgy as the official public worship of the Church
- Identify the two parts of the Mass: Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Recognize Jesus is present at Mass in the Word (Scripture), the person of the priest, the gathered community of believers, and in the Eucharist
- Participate in seasonal liturgical rituals and activities
- Participate in Reconciliation services
- Define sacrament as a way we meet Jesus in special ways and as a special sign given by God to give us grace – God's life
- Identify and name the seven Sacraments
- Know the five steps of Reconciliation
 - Confess your sins
 - Be sorry for your sins
 - Receive Penance for your sins
 - Receive Absolution from your sins
 - Experience Reconciliation with God
- Identify the signs and symbols of Baptism, Eucharist, and Reconciliation
- Explain that Bread and Wine are different and special and actually become the Body and Blood of Jesus at the Consecration
- Identify that the Last Supper is when Jesus gave us the Eucharist
- Know how to reverently receive Jesus in the Eucharist
- Explain that through the priest Jesus forgives our sins in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
- Know the proper procedures for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation which includes:
 - Examination of conscience
 - Talking with the priest
 - Praying the Act of Contrition
 - Doing the penance the priest gives

III. Life in Christ

The students will:

- Understand that their actions and decisions have consequences
- Imitate Jesus by learning to forgive others
- Understand that when you make a mistake you can try again; with true sorrow comes God's forgiveness
- Discuss what a friend is
- Identify that God's community includes family, classmates, and the parish community
- Describe the Church as a praying and worshipping community
- Begin to see that selfish choices hurt the community and loving choices reflect Jesus
- Recognize that their behavior affects their relationships with God and others
- Know the difference between right and wrong
- Show respect for parents, teachers, and legitimate authority
- Define stewardship as sharing God's gift of time, talent, and treasure
- Realize that God calls us to share our gifts with everyone
- Begin to see how they can share their gifts with others through service
- Demonstrate respect for all people, without exception

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Further define prayer as talking and listening to God
- Identify types of prayer:
 - Adoration (praise)
 - Contrition (sorrow)
 - Thanksgiving (gratitude)
 - Supplication (petition)
- Continue to identify prayer times and places to pray
- Demonstrate an ability to pray spontaneously
- Recite prayers:
 - Act of Contrition
 - Learn the responses at Mass
 - Learn the responses/prayers for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
 - Know the prayers learned in Kindergarten and First Grade
 - The Rosary

Third Grade

Faith-Focus: Believing in Jesus & Our Church Community

Jesus invites us to believe in Him, to become His valued friends and followers. He asks us to belong fully to His faith community, the Church. Jesus provides His Spirit to be with this living people of God, so that we continue His work of proclaiming God's kingdom.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 8-9)

A. Physical

The physical development of children at this age is marked by (1) slow and steady physical growth and (2) increased refinement of motor skills. Skills such as running, jumping, throwing, and hitting can be combined and used in simple games. As they grow physically, children realize the difference between boys and girls.

B. Cognitive

At this age children can think more logically about concrete objects and events in the present. This includes considering the logical relationship that exists between these concrete objects and the situation. They are beginning to be able to see things from another's point of view. They are rapidly developing their skills in communication. Their speaking vocabulary begins to exceed their reading vocabulary. They are developing self-confidence. Their creativity is at its peak and learning-games interest them. They begin to be "data" collectors.

C. Affective

Eight and nine-year-olds are on the threshold of a new level of growth. They are curious, self-aware, outgoing, and receptive to life. They are increasingly aware of themselves in relation to others, and are beginning to display genuine concern for the effects their actions have on others. These learners are torn between being children and their desire to be grown-ups. They

are better able to evaluate feelings with peers than to accept adult criticism. Children, at this age, are impatient when delayed or unable to accomplish desired goals.

D. Moral

Children at this stage are still motivated by fear of punishment, the hope of reward, and the desire for social approval. At this age, they are developing an insight into the nature of evil, although a discussion in a formal sense may be unproductive at this time. They are beginning to internalize rules and regulations enforced by parents and adults. They are developing their ability to set up some rules on their own. At this stage children need assurance that they are cared for and loved.

E. Social

Children evolve from an egocentric attitude to an increasing individual and communal awareness. They want to participate in groups, experience friendship, work cooperatively with others, and evaluate themselves in relationship to peers. Dependence on adults begins to decrease as the desire increases to attain status with their peers.

F. Religious

Children at this stage are at an extremely sensitive level of growth. Their future capacity to become loving, trusting, and autonomous persons depends upon the experiences of trust, acceptance, and love. They find this in their early cooperative ventures with peers and in supportive relationships with adults. These learners, although influenced by imagination and magic, are becoming more realistically oriented. They possess a fundamental loyalty and trust. Young people of this age often experience life as a story rather than a series of events. They are developing a deeper relationship with God. Children at this age know the externals of liturgical celebration. Their prayer is less magical and less egocentric.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Third Grade

Goals: To help the children understand the revelation of God in Jesus, God's Word, and the teachings of the Church. To help the church further explore the Mass, Eucharist, and Sacrament of Reconciliation. To help the children understand the relationship of God's family and participation in the Sacraments, liturgical ritual and activities of the Church.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Have a deeper understanding of the Trinity and the relationship of the Trinity with the Church.
2. Be able to name the 7 Sacraments and the symbols.
3. Know the responses in the Mass and actively participate in the Mass.
4. Know the names and roles of the Pope, Bishop, Priest, religious men and women, and lay ministers in their church.
5. Begin to further understand the Church and its Mission

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Identify the Bible as being organized into books, chapters and verses
- Know that the Bible has two main parts: Old Testament and New Testament
- Know pertinent Bible stories, especially ones from the life of Jesus
- Begin to see the connection and relativity of Scripture to their daily life
- Know that Jesus called the Apostles for a special mission
- Know that Pentecost is the coming of the Holy Spirit
- Know that their parish is part of the larger Church as a whole
- Know the structure of the Church and roles of the Church leaders
- Begin to discuss vocations and the relation of vocation to the Sacrament of Baptism
- Begin to explore the Apostles Creed
- Identify the Marks of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic
- Define the Communion of Saints
- Recognize Mary as the Mother of God and Mother of the Church
- Know the Ten Commandments and their application to their lives
- Know the Ten Commandments and two Great Commandments
- Define sin as hurting their relationship with God and others
- Explain that Jesus will come again in glory

II. Celebration of the Christian Mysteries

The students will:

- Participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist
- Participate regularly in the celebration of Reconciliation
- Know the Liturgical Seasons of the year and the colors associated with each season:
 - Advent - Purple
 - Christmas - White
 - Lent - Violet
 - Easter - White
 - Pentecost - Red
 - Ordinary Time - Green
- Know the Holy Days of Obligation
 - January 1 - Mary, Mother of God
 - Ascension of Our Lord
 - August 15 - Assumption of Mary into Heaven
 - November 1 - All Saints Day
 - December 8 - Immaculate Conception
 - December 25 - Christmas, Nativity of Our Lord
- Prepare an examination of conscience based on the Ten Commandments and Jesus' Law of Love
- Recall Sacraments as the way we encounter God and participate in God's life through the grace of the Sacraments
- Know the Seven Sacraments
- Define a sacrament as an outward sign/symbol instituted by Christ to give grace (God's life) to us (CCC 1131)
- Know the three categories of the Seven Sacraments
 - Sacraments of Initiation
 - Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist
 - Sacraments of Service
 - Holy Orders, Holy Matrimony
 - Sacraments of Healing
 - Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick

III. Life in Christ

The students will:

- Recognize the source of human dignity
- Respect all humanity which encompasses all cultures and racial groups
- Describe the Church as a community of believers with Christ as the head
- Identify skills for building up the community of believers

- Understand that God is the source of all authority
- Respond to God's Law of Love obediently by being the best they can be
- Express concerns for the marginalized of society by living the Corporal Works of Mercy
- Explain ways of being good stewards who recognize the responsibility of sharing their God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

IV. Christian Prayer

The student will:

- Recognize prayer as conversing with God
- Participate in meditative prayer
- Further explore the four types of prayer
 - Adoration (praise)
 - Contrition (sorrow)
 - Thanksgiving (gratitude)
 - Supplication (petition)
- Know the proper etiquette in liturgical situations
- Recite prayers
 - Act of Contrition
 - Mass Responses
 - Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - Apostles Creed
 - Nicene Creed
 - The Rosary

Fourth Grade

Faith-Focus: Living As Jesus' Followers

We are members of a community. We belong to God's people. As members who share the life and spirit of Catholic community, we try to live God's love and follow Jesus. We are given rules and guidelines on how to live and love as Jesus' followers.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 9-10)

A. Physical

This later stage of childhood builds on early childhood. Some characteristics will overlap. They are in a period of relative stability. Children's physical abilities greatly increase as does their coordination. There is a large increase in physical strength. They like to engage in sports but they can be prone to injury. At this age generally, but not necessarily, the boys exhibit a heightened awareness of the opposite sex.

B. Cognitive

Some nine and ten-year-old people are entering the transition stage between the concrete and abstract levels of thinking. They can classify and relate factual material with increasing skill. These learners are becoming reasoning persons who realize that there may be more than one answer, idea, or option. Many are willing to listen to adult and peer ideas. They are fact collectors. They enjoy discovering their own answers and have the ability to absorb material intelligently and to participate personally in the learning experience.

C. Affective

This period of life is one of stability sandwiched between the stresses of early childhood and adolescence. By nine years of age, children typically begin to be attracted to and to value whatever enables them to experience physical and mental control over their environment. Skill development becomes an end rather than a means to merit praise by significant adults. There is still a strong need for self-esteem. Peer approval becomes a more significant means of acquiring this esteem. Young of this age need encouragement to share with and to support each other, to praise the efforts of others, and to assert themselves without infringing on the rights and feelings of others. This is the age when teachers should be aware that all forms of bullying begin.

D. Moral

Children of this age begin to feel guilt in relation to specific and concrete actions, but not as a general condition. Rules and regulations are the basis for their concept of sin rather than their personal relationships with God and others. They are concerned with law and order if the rules are clear and applied with fairness and consistency. These learners need help to grow in the ability to distinguish between action and intention. Children who are nine and ten look for elementary, legalistic ideas of justice and want others to act properly. They like to know where they stand and what they should do. They demonstrate and expect fairness.

E. Social

Children at this age have an increasing desire for status with peers and yet are not quite ready to relinquish dependence on adults. Pressure of peer groups, the need for acceptance, and competitive versus cooperative instincts are very intense at this time. Interest in joint adventures runs high, but young people of this age usually prefer association with members of the same sex. Their struggle between autonomy and security is confusing. Adults in their world need to supply understanding and respect for their budding independence as well as direction and strength for their insecurities. Major differences in personality and the rate of maturation between boys and girls become evident. Assimilation into groups is much easier for boys than for girls. Girls need and demand more privacy than boys and are more conscious of personal appearance and acceptable behavior.

F. Religious

Generally, children at this age are progressing from a magical, very concrete form of thinking to a more rational approach to life. At times, however, they will exhibit both extremes. Information about God and Jesus is considered entirely true. These learners can regard Jesus realistically as a person like themselves. Their perception of the human Jesus, however, is often that of a master magician and miracle worker rather than Messiah or Savior. Stories of faith, the saints, and other model Christians appeal to their sense of hero worship. Their interest in faraway places and their concern for the feelings of people provide groundwork for peace and justice education. These learners enjoy the externals of liturgical celebration. They are more verbal in their prayers and responses, but they are not always able to grasp deeper religious meanings.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Fourth Grade

Goals: To help students live more fully their Christian faith by more fully participating in the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To help the students better understand the character of the Christian life based on Scripture, i.e., Ten Commandments, Law of Love, Beatitudes, and Works of Mercy.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Better understand the Ten Commandments
2. Know the difference between the Old Testament and New Testament
3. Develop a deeper understanding of Mary and her relation to the Church
4. Better understand making moral decisions in light of Church teachings
5. Know the Creed, the Works of Mercy and Beatitudes
6. Know the meaning of justice, reconciliation and penance
7. Participate in Eucharist and Reconciliation

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Discuss the idea of covenant based on the Bible stories of Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus
- Recognize the names of the Gospel writers
- Know the Bible reference for the Beatitudes
- Learn the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy
- Recognize the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church
- Learn the Apostles Creed
- List the basic doctrine and beliefs of the Church emphasizing the forgiveness of sin and be able to relate it to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

II. Celebration of the Christian Mysteries

The students will:

- Participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist
- Know the main parts of the Mass and Mass responses
- Know the Liturgical Seasons and color of each season
- Participate in Penance Services and the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Know that the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is a journey of conversion

III. Life in Christ

The students will:

- Define virtues as good habits
- Know the three theological virtues
- Know the four cardinal virtues
- Know God is the source of all human dignity
- Know the difference between choosing right and wrong based on the Ten Commandments, Law of Love, Beatitudes and the Works of Mercy
- Understand the need for authority and that all authority and law is based on the Ten Commandments
- Know how Jesus' Law of Love is based on love of God and love of neighbor is from the Ten Commandments
- Know the Body of Christ is the Church and what one does affects the whole body
- Know the laws/precepts of the Church
- Begin to see the "corporal dimension of sin"
- Examine the importance and necessity of rules in family, school, church and community
- Learn the Ten Commandments and explain the meaning
- Understand what obedience means and consequences to disobedience
- List and understand the conditions that need to be present for a sin to be mortal
- Begin to define and understand conscience
- Begin to discuss conscience formation as based on Scripture and Church teachings
- Show an understanding of Beatitudes by demonstrating ways to apply them in their lives
- Show an understanding of Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy by demonstrating ways to apply them in their lives.

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Recite all the basic prayers
- Discuss prayer as talking and listening to God, i.e., conversation, and relate how this conversation is like talking and listening to their friends
- Be given the opportunity to lead prayer services and organize prayer rituals
- List and be able to give examples of
 - Adoration
 - Contrition
 - Thanksgiving (gratitude)
 - Supplication (petition)

- Know “prayer reverence” and proper reverence at Mass
- Be given the opportunity to pray spontaneously

Fifth Grade

Faith-Focus: Celebrating Jesus' Presence

The sacraments are signs of Jesus' ongoing presence among God's people. Through sacraments of initiation, healing, and service, we encounter the Lord in special ways. Through certain prayers, practices, and other traditions, we celebrate and strengthen our Catholic Christian identity.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 10-11)

A. Physical

In this later stage of childhood, children may grow at a steady rate or in small spurts. Motor skills learned in earlier years are further refined. Childhood games also require advanced cognitive skills such as turn-taking and the social understanding necessary to coordinate multiple players in a mutual activity. Because school age children's bones grow faster than their muscles they are less flexible. For this reason they are at a stage when their movements seem awkward. It is the first step in the transition from childhood to adulthood and an important period for the physical maturation of the young person.

Girls, especially, are approaching puberty. Some will experience its onset earlier than others.

B. Cognitive

Children at ages 10 and 11 think on a factual/concrete level. Their ability to form abstract ideas or concepts based on experience continues to increase. They manifest an intense curiosity, a thirst for new experiences, and a desire to collect, organize, and correlate factual material. They enjoy making collections of all kinds. They tend to see details more clearly than the main idea. Young people at this age can observe people or situations and form conclusions about them. They search for explanations and are beginning to work with universals. Memorization of detail is possible and should always be coupled with understanding. Their attention span usually exceeds 20 minutes. Children of this age like to read, can participate in activities with complicated rules, can think chronologically, enjoy being silly, and delight in playing with the multiple meanings of language.

C. Affective

At this stage in their development they are beginning to develop their own attitudes independent of adults. They are discarding childish behavior patterns, but this can fluctuate a great deal. They are attracted to and value whatever enables them to experience physical and mental control over their environment. Skill development becomes an end. Children at this age have one or two close friends of the same sex. Peer approval becomes a significant means of acquiring self-esteem. Sex differences are pronounced at this age. Sexual thoughts, feelings, and behavior are continuing to increase rapidly. There is heightened curiosity of their sexuality. This is a good time for ongoing catechesis in human sexuality. It is a time when accurate terminology can replace infantile or even obscene expressions that may have been acquired earlier. There is a greater variation of maturity physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially within this age grouping. These young people can be moody, sensitive, restless, and disorganized. Children of this age are sometimes jealous of siblings and talk back to adults, especially family members and authority figures. They are sensitive to criticism, but are beginning to see that some criticism can be useful.

D. Moral

Children in this development stage are motivated by hope of reward/social approval for living the rules and, at times, by the desire for a world that lives by moral principles. Their concern for maintaining orderly relationships will provide a stepping stone to the kind of conventional morality that respects laws and seeks stability and justice. They begin to realize that their intentions can be good or bad. Opportunities for making decisions increase as their social experiences broaden. What the peer group regards as right and wrong strongly influences personal choices of the individuals involved. The authority of the adult group is replaced by the authority of the peer group. Morally, children of this age begin to feel guilt in relation to concrete/specific actions, but not as a general condition. The concept of sin remains in the realm of rules and regulations rather than in a personal relationship with God and others. The desire to be accepted by and acceptable to adults and peers will gradually become the single motivating factor in their moral reasoning. Growth in the capacity to reason is a key mark of this level of development.

E. Social

During this stage, they begin to free themselves from the total effective dependency they had on adults. They want increasing independence from the family, yet realize that it is a place of security. The peer group becomes their new frame of reference. They become more aware of their own individuality, and the individuality of others. Talents declare themselves and

creativity is expressed as social integration. The children become particularly receptive to social information and concerns. They begin to make comparative social judgments.

F. Religious

It is a time of transition from magical, very concrete thinking to a more rational approach to life. They will exhibit both extremes. Consciousness of others begins to clarify the meaning of Jesus, his message, and sin. Stories of faith and belonging to a faith group become meaningful. Although they are more verbal, young people of this age are not always able to grasp deeper religious meanings.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Fifth Grade

Goals: To help students become more responsible members of the Church by fully participating in the Sacraments. To help the student deepen their understanding of the Seven Sacraments.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Continue to explore the importance of the sacraments with emphasis on Baptism, Eucharist, and Reconciliation
2. Continue to explain the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy
3. Know the Holy Days of Obligation
4. Be able to define grace, trinity, vocation, prayer, reconciliation, absolution, sacraments, and sacramental
5. Explain and know the parts of the Mass
6. Understand vocation as it relates to the Baptismal call
7. Know the three divisions of the Sacraments:
 - Initiation
 - Service
 - Healing

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Identify Scripture passages related to each of the Seven Sacraments
- Identify Acts of the Apostles as the beginning history of the early Church
- Define Church as a Sacrament of Christ in the world
- See the development of the Sacraments in the early Church through the Acts of the Apostles
- Define a sacrament as a special way we meet Jesus and as a sign given to us by Jesus to give us grace
- Discuss the meaning of peace as God's life within us
- Identify the three types of grace:
 - Sanctifying
 - Actual
 - Sacramental
- Discuss the way the Trinity is manifested in the Sacraments

II. Celebration of the Christian Mystery

The students will:

- Participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist
- Outline the Order of the Mass
- Explain the Sacred Vessels and objects used at Mass
- Explain the Liturgical Seasons and colors of the seasons
- Define sacramentals and know the difference between a Sacrament and a sacramental by giving examples
- Participate regularly in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
- Know the Seven Sacraments
- Know the symbols of each Sacrament
- Know the relationship of one Sacrament to the other Sacraments
- Know the three categories of Sacraments:
 - Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation
 - Service: Matrimony, Holy Orders
 - Healing: Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick

- Baptism
 - Explain Baptism as a welcoming into the community and the beginning of a new life in grace
 - Renew Baptismal promises
 - Relate the story of the Baptism of Jesus to Baptism
 - List and explain the signs and symbols of Baptism
- Confirmation
 - Explain Confirmation as a strengthening and completion of the grace of Baptism
 - Relate the account of Pentecost to Confirmation
 - List the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit
 - List and explain the signs and symbols of Confirmation
- Eucharist
 - Explain Eucharist as an action of thanksgiving through which Jesus is present
 - Discuss the aspects of the Eucharist as both a meal and a sacrifice
 - Relate the story of the Last Supper to Eucharist
 - Discuss the meaning of real presence
- Penance and Reconciliation
 - Identify sin as weakening our relationship with God and the Church community
 - Explain reconciliation as restoring our relationship with God and the Church community through God's mercy and forgiveness
 - Relate the story of the Prodigal Son to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

- Identify the elements of a good confession: examination of conscience, contrition, confession absolution, and penance
- List and explain the signs and symbols of reconciliation
- Anointing of the Sick
 - Explain Anointing of the Sick as a celebration of Christ's healing presence in our lives
 - Discuss various ways that healing may take place
 - Relate some of the healing stories of Jesus to the Anointing of the Sick
 - List and explain the signs and symbols of Anointing of the Sick
- Matrimony
 - Explain matrimony as a celebration of a grace-filled covenant and union between a man and a woman (Ephesians 5:32)
 - Discuss that the self-giving love of the sacrament mirrors Christ's divine love for His church
 - Relate the Wedding Feast of Cana to the Sacrament of Matrimony
 - Discuss the characteristics of marriage as permanence, loving fidelity, openness to children, and mutual support
 - List and explain the signs and symbols of Matrimony
 - Identify the couple as the ministers of the sacrament
- Holy Orders
 - Explain Holy Orders as a celebration of the call to serve God's people through the ordained ministry
 - Discuss the evolution of the priesthood to the Last Supper
 - Identify the three orders of Holy Orders, deacons, priests, bishops
 - Discuss the difference between religious priests and diocesan priests
 - List and explain the signs and symbols of Holy Orders

III. Life In Christ

The students will:

- Show compassion for the sick and dying out of love for the Christian family
- Compare God's forgiving us to how we should forgive others
- See vocation as God's call to live out Baptism in one of three states:
 - Single
 - Married
 - Ordained/Religious
- Know the Ten Commandments, Law of Love, Beatitudes, Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy and how these help us to form a conscience which leads to a moral life
- Know how the Sacraments help us better serve God and love one another by participation God's life of grace

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Recite all basic prayers
- Compose original prayers
- Know and pray the mysteries of the Rosary
- Pray spontaneously and use meditation
- Know and give examples of
 - Adoration (praise)
 - Contrition (sorrow)
 - Thanksgiving (gratitude)
 - Supplication (petition)
- Demonstrate proper prayer posture and practices at Mass

Sixth Grade

Faith-Focus: Discovering the Story of God's People

The Bible is a sacred book which tells the great Story of God's chosen people. Reading the Bible we learn about God, creation, our many Judeo-Christian ancestors, and their faith journey through the centuries. In the Bible, we have the written record of Jesus' life and of this announcement of God's kingdom. (CCC 101-103)

Factors in Human Development (Ages 11-12)

A. Cognitive

Eleven and twelve-year-olds can use their minds to a greater degree than those younger. They tend to be very intellectual – preoccupied with facts, reasons, and discovery through experimentation. Most can work effectively with universal and deductive reasoning in arriving at conclusions. Many still need grounding in concrete objects and situations when dealing with abstract ideas. They continue to see details more clearly than main ideas. They prefer working with the concrete rather than the abstract.

B. Affective

At this stage important physical, emotional, and intellectual changes have a direct bearing on how they accept themselves and others. They are learning to accept themselves as male or female and to deal with others in those terms. Negative conditioning and ignorance are the primary problems in psychosexual development at this stage. Ongoing Christian education in human sexuality can assist eleven and twelve-year-olds in coming to terms with themselves and others as sexual beings. Confusion, curiosity, uncertainty, and experimentation in behavior tend to accompany their search for a personal identity. The peer group plays a prominent role in the process of developing self-image and self-worth. These students possess needs for security and autonomy, for self-esteem and active control of the loving reinforcement of family, in negotiating these challenges, inconsistent behavior patterns, restlessness, moodiness, and over-sensitivity. An increasing need for personal privacy is also to be expected at this stage.

C. Moral

Eleven and twelve-year-olds are still largely motivated by self-interest. Their enlarging world offers them new possibilities for freedom and decision-making. In making choices, they begin to consider the effect their personal behavior has on the relationships they value. Slowly they begin to assume responsibility for their actions. The “code” of the group dominates. They have a natural concern for law and order. Their moral judgments are generally based on this logical appreciation for law and order, fairness, and consistency. Many are capable of acting out of the “spirit of justice” rather than out of the earlier framework of “objective obedience”. Given the chance to accept responsibility and make decisions, most eleven and twelve-year-olds begin to note the importance of motivation and intent in making and carrying out good decisions. Students in this stage need the freedom to make mistakes and be wrong. They will at times lack the perseverance needed to bring tasks to successful completion. They tend to excuse themselves for these failures, but will be very hard on their peers who do not succeed. They tend to adapt to the behavior of their friends. They also will imitate the patterns of other people they know and like. For this reason, eleven and twelve-year-olds truly need the support of trusted adults who can help them grow in freedom and responsibility.

D. Social

Students gradually move from effective dependency on significant others to interpersonal relationships of mutuality based on rules. Their interests now extend beyond the family to the peer group. Peers strongly influence attitudes, values, and social behavior. The need for acceptance is very intense. The desire to belong and participate in group ventures is very high. Deepening self-awareness supplies them with the sensitivity needed for more meaningful relationships. Same-sex friends still tend to be the norm. Reaching out in service to others is becoming appealing.

E. Faith

Imagination and intuition are tempered by logic and reason around this time. Students have a growing ability to distinguish, past, present, and future and to see themselves as part of a greater whole. They experience life as a kind of story rather than merely a series of isolated events. These developmental capacities enable the eleven and twelve-year-olds to build a deeper understanding of God, faith community and the world. Unconsciously, they begin to open themselves up to the heroic, community-based qualities they admire in others. They seek to identify and belong, admiring Jesus and all others who make our world a better place. Self-identity and conscience formation are greatly influenced at this time.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Sixth Grade

Goals: To enable the students to recognize and understand that faith leads them on a journey with God that began with the Hebrew people. To understand the Old Testament as a covenant process where God made a covenant with his people and fulfilled the promise with Jesus' coming as revealed in the New Testament.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Understand Scripture is the inspired Word of God
2. Become skilled in finding books of the Bible and using Scriptural references by chapter and verse
3. Recognize and explain the meaning of words and concepts as they are understood in the context of Old Testament time and culture
4. Be able to explain and site examples of different literary forms used in the Bible
5. Demonstrate knowledge of sacred time, sacred space, and sacred places of the Jewish people as they are understood in the context of Old Testament culture
6. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of liturgical seasons and relate Catholic liturgical seasons and feasts to Jewish feasts

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The student will:

- Discuss the Bible as a collection of books, inspired by the Holy Spirit
- Discuss the teaching that God is the author of Scripture because God inspired the human writers
- Identify that there are forty-six books in the Old Testament
- Identify that there are twenty-seven books in the New Testament
- Know that the first five books are the Pentateuch or Torah or the Law, and memorize their names in order
- Know the major divisions of the Old Testament
 - Law
 - Historical Books
 - Wisdom Books
 - Prophetical Books
 - Pentateuch Books
- Define **Covenant** as a solemn oath between people and God involving mutual commitments
- Know that "testament" means "covenant"

- Know examples of Old Testament covenant relationships
- Recognize that Jesus fulfilled the Old Covenant (Testament) and establishes the New Covenant (Testament)
- Discuss how Salvation History begins with the creation story
- Define Salvation History as God's unfolding work of salvation throughout history
- Know important stories and people from the Old Testament
- Realize that our Christian faith is rooted in the faith of the Jewish people
- Realize that our rituals and liturgies are rooted in Jewish tradition
- Identify Scripture and Tradition as the two sources of Catholic Christian Revelation
- Know that tradition is the living transmission of faith handed down from one generation to the next through the apostolic succession

II. Celebration of the Christian Mystery

The students will:

- Celebrate Advent as the season of waiting and preparation for the coming of the Messiah in our daily lives and at the end of time
- Celebrate Christmas as the season that fulfills the promise made in the Old Testament
- Celebrate Lent as a season of Penance and a time of renewal
- Discuss the Triduum as the celebration of the Paschal Mystery
- Know that as a season, Holy Week and Easter celebrate the Paschal Mystery and the Resurrection of Jesus

III. Life In Christ

The students will:

- Discuss and defend the dignity of human beings as found in the story
- Recognize and respect the diversity of people and the necessity of respecting people's rights
- Recognize the family as source of spiritual values, religion, and traditions that lead us to our relationship with God
- Identify ways God called the prophets in the Old Testament to serve the community and how God still calls prophets to service
- Explain vocations as a call from God; list examples from the Old Testament and the New Testament
- Recognize the Ten Commandments as part of the Covenant God made with God's people

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Identify and learn familiar prayers and practices:
 - Magnificat
 - Canticle of Zachariah
 - Our Father
 - Hail Mary
 - Eucharistic Prayer
 - Participate in various prayer forms
 - Demonstrate proper etiquette at Mass and liturgical functions
 - the Beatitudes
 - the Cardinal and Theological Virtues
 - the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
 - the Apostles and Nicene Creed
 - the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love
 - Stations of the Cross

Seventh Grade

Faith-Focus: Encountering Jesus and His “Good News”

Catholic Christians today, as well as people over the centuries, strive to answer the question, “Who is Jesus?” The Gospels give witness to Jesus. Members of the Catholic community follow him, believe in his “Good News”, celebrate his life, death, and Resurrection, and continue to spread his “Good News” message to all of humanity.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 12-13)

A. Cognitive

Young people aged twelve and thirteen are learning to use both inductive and deductive reasoning with greater sophistication. These developing abilities help them begin to address conflicts of conscience and pursue their new-found knowledge concerning what it means to be an authentic woman or man. Although capable of abstract thinking, they still need actual examples to add depth to theory. Their attention span is about 20-30 minutes. Twelve and thirteen-year-olds are capable of dealing with history in a new sense. They can reflect meaningfully on the past and have a real need for future goals and ideals toward which they can grow. They need to be needed, are service-minded, and want to be useful to society. Because they are now able to learn more about themselves and their needs, they are ready for a more mature approach to life, religion, and redemption.

B. Affective

Life for twelve and thirteen-year-olds becomes very complicated. They are faced with new and varied experiences, rapid physical and psychological changes, academic progress, greater mobility, and autonomy from parents. Their need to exercise independence and creative control in this enlarging environment remains dominant. Seeking a sense of self-identity, twelve and thirteen-year-olds try on and act out different patterns of behavior regardless of their inconsistency. They become easily bored, frustrated, moody, confused, egotistic, selfish, and sexuality increases as they begin to approach sexual awakening. They need to accept themselves as male and female and to relate to both genders. They continue to have one or two friends of the same sex. It is important that support be continued educationally, offering a

holistic, catholic approach to God's gift of human sexuality. Approval and acceptance by peers and significant adults becomes extremely important. They may form crushes on adults other than parents and fall into patterns of hero worship. Young people ages twelve and thirteen struggle to be responsible and to be adult. They need a great deal of support in negotiating this challenging transition.

C. Moral

This stage can be very difficult for twelve and thirteen-year-olds since, for the first time, they must begin to face decisions that have serious moral significance for both themselves and others. They begin to recognize the necessity and role of laws and rules, moral principles, and sanctions that seem reasonable and just. They must learn how to use their cognitive and affective abilities to cope with increasingly complex environment. Through the years of catholic moral teaching, they are challenged by their life experiences to begin to make decisions for which they are morally accountable. In doing so, they will begin to notice the serious gap between moral conduct and Christian faith in the adult community. Consequently, they rebel against all authority, rejecting the rules and moral principles of parents and other significant adults that do not seem to meet the standards of reason and justice. Physiological development causes tensions in the area of conscience development. Growing sexual awareness may lead to sexual experimentation. The need for an orderly, predictable relationship with a person of the opposite sex is complicated by the experience of the sexual drive. Unless properly guided, youth of this age may seek escape rather than endure the discomfort of pain produced by any of their immature and natural attempts at self-expression. With proper guidance, this normal situation of development can be a spring board toward greater maturity.

D. Social

Peer relationships are extremely important. Twelve and thirteen-year-olds, identify strongly with special groups of friends and will do all sorts of things to be accepted. The family unit is now seen as one of many places deserving of their time and loyalty. A degree of withdrawal from family and adult authority is both normal and necessary at this level of development. There will be times when they will be negative and antagonistic toward "those in charge." This is the age of searching for self-image. It is at times difficult for twelve and thirteen-year-olds to determine whether they are children or adults. They need much love and support in spite of their inability to respond.

E. Faith

There are several significant times in the development of a human being when conversion (growth in our spirituality) is significant. Adolescence is one of these periods. Within the process of conversion, the seventh grader becomes aware that the structures of childhood with regard to faith are not adequately answering new questions of life and faith. It is normal for them to begin a stage of questioning, while actively listening to the adults in their lives. These adults, including the catechist, offer a new or rediscovered way of salvation according to adult questions. The breakdown is necessary for conversion. It will be different for each seventh grader in intensity and age. This is the beginning of the conversion from childhood to adult spirituality.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum for Catechesis

Seventh Grade

Goals: To enable the students to understand the life and ministry of Jesus as revealed in Scripture, especially in the Gospel stories in the New Testament. To help students come into a deeper understanding of the sacraments, symbols, and ritual based on Scripture and Tradition.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Know where to find particular passages in the New Testament concerning Jesus' birth, ministry, passion, death, and resurrection
2. Learn prayer forms to help them grow in their daily prayer life
3. Have a deeper understanding of the sacraments and their connection to each other
4. Begin to see the connection of the liturgical seasons with Jesus' life
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the Judeo-Christian foundation that begins with Abraham and goes through the Acts of the Apostles
6. Be able to find scripture reference in the New Testament for the Beatitudes, New Covenant, Incarnation, Pentecost, Resurrection, Messiah, Synagogues, Temple, Transfiguration, parable, miracle, disciples, and Apostles
7. Name the main parts of the New Testament: Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles (Letters), and Revelation

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Understand the Gospels as accounts of Jesus' life
- Know the audience and style of each of the Gospel writers
- Recognize the meaning of the term evangelist, and why the writers of the Gospels are evangelists
- Understand the meanings of the parables
- Identify the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount as the center of Jesus teachings
- Define the Acts of the Apostles as the accounts of the early Church
- Define the Epistles as letters written to the early Christian Communities
- Identify themes in the Epistles in relation to life
- Know the names of the apostles and the stories of their callings
- Examine the role of the Holy Spirit in the early church beginning with the Pentecost experience
- Examine the role of Mary in the Church
- Know the various titles of Jesus and the references to them in the Old

Testament

- Identify Jesus' mission as Messiah and Savior
- Define Incarnation as God becoming human and taking on human nature
- Know that Jesus is True God and True Man
- Know that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist
- Know the various titles of Mary and what they say about her life
- Know the name and definition of "angel", and how they relate to God's teachings
- Recognize the Communion of Saints as including pilgrims on earth and those who have died
- Recognize the second coming of Christ as announced in the New Testament
- Define the four Marks of the Church
 - One
 - Holy
 - Catholic
 - Apostolic

II. Celebration of the Christian Mystery

The students will:

- Examine the parts of the Mass
- Know what the New Roman Missal and Lectionary are
- Read and reflect on the Sunday readings
- Participate weekly in the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration
- Participate regularly in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and parish Communal Penance Services
- See the connection between Jesus' life and the Sacraments
- Reference in the Gospel and Epistles each particular sacrament
- Reference the symbols of the Sacraments through the Old Testament and New Testament

III. Life In Christ

The students will:

- Recognize God as the source of human dignity and how the life and teachings of Jesus illuminate the truth
- Reference Scripture to show the sacredness of life from conception until natural death
- Use the Beatitudes as the guidelines for treating others
- Cite New Testament passages of call/vocation from God to serve community
- Recognize gifts God has given and recognize God's call to use these gifts for God's people
- Name the types of vocation in the church and understand their connection with

the Baptismal call:

- Single (including consecrated life)
- Married
- Ordained
- Discuss how the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life and teachings model for us how to live a moral life
- Define and explain the distinction between mortal and venial sin
- Discuss consequences of sin and cite examples from scripture
- Apply the Beatitudes and Jesus' Law of Love to their personal lives
- List and explain the seven capital sins, cardinal and moral virtues and the theological virtues
- Recognize how Jesus' life was one of service and love
- Discuss the Gospel values and responsibilities and how they remain the basis for social and economic rights
- Identify how various saints in the history of the Church led lives of justice, mercy and love

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Identify and know familiar prayers and practices
 - Magnificat
 - Our Father
 - Hail Mary
 - the Beatitudes
 - Cardinal and Theological Virtues
 - Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
 - Apostles and Nicene Creed
 - Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love
 - Memorare
- Understand the 7 petitions in the our Father
- Participate in various forms of prayer
- Demonstrate proper etiquette at Mass and liturgical functions

Eighth Grade

Faith-Focus: Belonging To Our Church Community

Our faith community is the Catholic Church. As Catholics, we recognize that our mission, our sacraments and ministries trace to the “Good News” of Jesus and His earliest disciples. As a Church, we believe, pray, celebrate, and strive to live Jesus’ way of life and loving.

Factors in Human Development (Ages 13-14)

A. Cognitive

Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds are learning to use their deductive and inductive capacities with greater sophistication. They are becoming increasingly capable of dealing with abstract ideas and judgments. Growth from the self-centeredness of earlier years launches the thirteen and fourteen-year-olds into a sea of opinions and judgments made by others. This broadening intellectual and social world stimulates a questioning, critical spirit. Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds, need to explore reason and reflect. They need to grapple with their new experiences as part of maturation toward adulthood. Their intellectual abilities can help them in solving increased conscience conflicts and in searching for the “meaning” in all this new found knowledge. Able to learn more about themselves and their own needs, thirteen and fourteen-year-olds are ready for a more mature approach to life, faith, and conscience formation. Their previous preoccupation with facts, reasons, and discovery through experimentation continues, expressing itself in a multitude of hobbies and personal projects. They need support in planning projects and in carrying them through to completion.

B. Affective

Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds begin to be more preoccupied with themselves than with the world outside of them. This shift is triggered by puberty. Everything seems to be in flux: body, feelings, ideas, and relationships. They are faced with many more options in making decisions. They struggle for freedom/independence and self-identity. Needs for security, recognition, acceptance, and self-worth run high. Many thirteen and fourteen-year-olds experience tremendous stress at this time. They need support in handling their stress constructively.

Unhealthy options for escape seem very appealing to these young people. Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds possess tremendous energy and a natural idealism waiting to be channeled in constructive directions. If suppressed, these gifts can be misdirected into expressions of cynicism and hostility.

C. Moral

This stage is very important in terms of overall moral development. Thirteen and fourteen year-olds are beginning to face decisions that have serious moral significance for themselves and others. They must learn to effectively use their cognitive and effective capacities to cope with an increasingly complex world. Their need to form orderly, predictable relationships with persons of the opposite sex is complicated by their experience of the sex drive. Ongoing Catholic education in chaste living is an essential support at this stage of development. They need to learn how to deal with their feelings of bewilderment, confusion, and discouragement as they search for the truth of themselves and others through experimentation. At times, thirteen and fourteen-year-olds will experiment in activities that prevent them from discovering what they really want to know: "Am I really worth something?" Conscience conflicts increase in proportion to the freedom they experience. Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds face these crises with a kind of absolutism in their value judgments. They exhibit difficulty in relating their values to concrete situations. They become critical of adults whose lifestyles are inconsistent with their stated values, although they lack the maturity to be consistent themselves. Their moral judgments tend toward legalism as they wrestle with the true meaning of religion, faith, learned principles, and their experiences.

D. Social

The interests of thirteen and fourteen-year-olds now extend beyond family and school. Peer groups are still very influential. They feel more comfortable acting out of a valued peer group. When peer relationships break down, thirteen and fourteen-year-olds feel a sense of hurt and personal failure. Being more self-conscious, many are less expressive of their feelings and shy away from risk situations. They still need the emotional support and guidance of family and other significant adults. A degree of withdrawal from family is both normal and necessary at this level of development.

E. Faith

Externally, thirteen and fourteen-year-olds appear to be less religious, but this usually is the result of an inability to be expressive in regard to personal matters. In reality, youth of this age have the capacity to be more religious. They are coming to grips with some of the basic

questions of life and are dropping their childish notions of God, faith , church, and religion. Thirteen and fourteen-year-olds often disagree with adult and their own former ways of thinking/relating. They are beginning to re-evaluate and integrate a more mature set of values. The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NDC #179)

Curriculum For Catechesis

Eighth Grade

Goals: To enable the students to trace the historical development of the Church from the time of Jesus until the present. To help the students understand the Mission and Ministry of the Church and how they are commissioned as baptized members of the Church to live this mission.

Outcomes: The students will:

1. Outline the major periods in the history of the Church.
2. Name the key people in the historical development of the Church.
3. Name the five precepts of the Church.
4. Name the four marks of the Church.
5. Know the liturgical seasons of the Church.
6. Recognize the Acts of the Apostles as accounts of the early church.

Objectives:

I. Profession of Faith

The students will:

- Identify and discuss the New Testament passages that reference the early Church
- Trace the growth of the Church beginning with Pentecost through Paul's accounts of the early church expressed in the Epistles and in the Acts of the Apostles
- Understand Pentecost as the birthday of the Church
- Know the account of Paul's conversion experience and relate a time that they experienced God
- Discuss the mission and the journey of Paul
- Trace the development of the church through the Roman persecution
- Know who Constantine was, the role he played in Church history, and the significance of the date 313 A.D.
- Identify early heresies and councils of the Church, i.e. Jerusalem, Nicaea, Chalcedon
- Know the development and importance of the Religious orders
- Know the reason for the Crusades and how they affected the world
- Know what the Great Schism was and the affects it had on the Eastern and Western Church
- Discuss the Reformation and rise of other Christian faith traditions
- Know the significance of Martin Luther King, Henry VIII, and John Calvin

- Know the missionary activity of the Church during colonial times in the New World
- Know how the Council of Trent affected the Church
- Know how the second Vatican Council impacted the Church and world
- Know that the Church's doctrine on sacraments differ from other faith traditions
- Know and explain the Four Marks of the Church
 - One
 - Holy
 - Catholic
 - Apostolic
- Define the meaning of papal infallibility and the primacy of Peter
- List the hierarchy of the Church and know the responsibility of each role
- Examine the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds
- List and explain the five precepts of the Church

II. Celebration of the Christian Mystery

The students will:

- View all human life as sacred from conception to natural death
- See that all humans have God-given rights and therefore deserve respect and dignity
- Describe examples from the early Church of respecting life and dignity of the human person
- See the connection of Baptism with the call to holiness and living as members of Christ's Body, the Church
- Describe what a vocation is and how our response builds up the Church
- Define and give examples of social sin
- Discuss conscience and conscience formation
- Explain how the Ten Commandments and Jesus' Law of Love are our basis for all Church law
- Explain how Catholic values help us to make our moral decisions and form our conscience
- Explain how the Principles of Catholic Social Teachings have evolved over our history
- Know the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- Know examples of saints throughout history who modeled these principles of social justice

III. Life in Christ

The students will:

- view all human life as sacred from conception to natural death

- see that all humans have God given rights and therefore deserve respect and dignity
- describe examples from the early Church of respecting life and dignity of the human person
- see the connection of baptism with the call to holiness and living as members of Christ's Body, the Church
- describe what a vocation is and how our response builds up of the Church
- define and give examples of social sin
- discuss conscience and conscience formation
- explain how the Ten Commandments and Jesus' Law of Love are our basis for all Church law
- explain how Catholic values help us make our moral decisions and form our conscience
- explain how the principles of Catholic Social Teaching have evolved over our history
- know the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- know examples of saints throughout history who modeled these principles of social justice

IV. Christian Prayer

The students will:

- Know all basic prayers
- Know the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- Know the Beatitudes
- Know the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love
- Know the Cardinal Theological Virtues
- Know all parts of the Mass
- Know the Apostles' and Nicene Creed
- Know various prayer forms
- Know prayer etiquette rituals

Ninth Grade

As a person grows in self-understanding and self-appreciation, insight into the person of Jesus gains much interest. The human Jesus, his strength and courage, becomes more attractive and demands greater understanding.

Factors in human Development (Ages 14-15)

A. Cognitive

They protect their independence of thought, reacting quickly to anyone who opposes their freedom to act in their own way. They don't want to be a carbon copy of anyone else. The urge to become autonomous is developing largely through oppositional behavior.

B. Affective

Fourteen and fifteen-year-old males may be in the final stages of puberty. If so, they will be struggling with awkwardness in a physical and emotional sense. Males are self-conscious about their physical build and appearance. How they feel about their appearance will affect their behavior toward others. Males may be courteous, but generally they tend to lack refinement in feelings. Due to sporadic bursts of growth, they are extremely awkward and uneasy. Because males still lack any strong sense of "self", they will seek much support in groups or "gangs". Despite the great bravado they show when with peers, they are generally unsecure and shy around girls. Fourteen and fifteen-year-old females are physically more advanced than males, which permits them to have a more developed self-image. Females are more sensitive and more easily hurt or pleased by others' reactions. Both fourteen and fifteen-year-old males need to grow out of the attitudes that are appropriate only to the world of children: complete dependence, irrationality and naiveté.

C. Moral

Fourteen and fifteen-year-old males continue the discovery that as individuals, there is something unique about themselves. They can and must have values of their own. Females tend toward a negative view of the life around them as they begin to formulate a set of values for themselves. Fourteen and fifteen-year-olds need opportunities to freely express their ideas and to experiment with guidance and reasonable latitude. They should be allowed exposure to many experiences in order to give them a broad base on which to make judgments.

D. Social

In their attempt to evaluate their own worth and value, fourteen and fifteen-year-olds need constant support, understanding and acceptance from adults. Such experiences are essential if they are to arrive at self-respect for others. They need to compare themselves to mature adults who stimulate them to reevaluate themselves and their values. They also need heroic figures either from history or contemporary society who provide them with ideals to emulate. It is essential that adults compliment and praise them for their achievements. This will help greatly in reinforcing the values which precipitated the achievements. In short, fourteen and fifteen-year-olds need to be accepted as persons who are searching and growing, and supported by adults who show not only concern but understanding.

E. Faith

The fourteen and fifteen-year-olds' interest in religion revolves around a series of personal questions:

Who am I? Where do I come from? What must I do? Does God exist and can I reach him? When can I be sure? The human Jesus, his strength and courage, can be of much interest to fourteen and fifteen-year-olds. Abstract spiritual concepts are generally not attractive at this time.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, family influences, previous experiences and cultural background.

TENTH GRADE

Part of the maturing process is taking responsibility in forming relationships with others by assuming greater responsibility for personal decisions. This carries on into the nature of the faith relationship. Therefore, we must grow in the ability to pray and to benefit by the moral guidance of the Church. (See CCC, #1691, #2558)

FACTORS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (AGES 15-16)

A. COGNITIVE

Fifteen and sixteen-year-olds are capable of asking philosophical questions about themselves and life. They may be capable of pursuing Questions that involve the full range of abstract thinking. Though they are capable, chances are they will not be emotionally ready to do so.

B. AFFECTIVE

Fifteen and sixteen-year-olds are entering into the preliminary phase of adult maturity. Their attitude at this time is typically one of disenchantment with all that had meaning for them as children. They can be extremely negative. This is seen in moods of deep depression, loneliness, and indifference to persons and things around them. Because the fifteen and sixteen-year-old male is easily bored, it is difficult to maintain his interest or loyalty. He leaves many projects and endeavors half finished. He can be physically listless and inactive, an apparent contradiction to his periodic hyperactivity. The fifteen and sixteen-year-old female is deeply and intensely than the male, a trait which she will maintain into adulthood. Generally she will emerge from this stage more quickly than the male, but not without having experienced more intensely the loneliness and confusion of this age in her development.

C. MORAL

In order to escape the boredom common to this period, the fifteen and sixteen-year-old may pick up some bad habits - drinking, vandalism, etc. These are usually outgrown as quickly as

they appear. The moral responsibility of the individual should be studied by fifteen and sixteen year olds.

D. SOCIAL

Parents are predominant scapegoats for the youth's frustrations and confusion. Adults must be aware that the fifteen and sixteen year olds criticism and contempt do not normally reflect a real aversion to them but rather are their way of expressing their own internal turmoil. Order has little or no value at this time, and as a result they are often unkempt and their room is chaotic.

E. FAITH

Fifteen and sixteen-year-olds' new insights into personal relationships prepare them for insights into personal faith and prayer.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NCD, #179).

ELEVENTH GRADE

We all have a natural idealism and seek to gain insight into the bigger picture, that is, the nature and destiny of humankind. We must learn to appreciate God as giving meaning to the destiny of humankind.

(See CCC #26)

FACTORS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (AGES 16-17)

A. COGNITIVE

Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds begin to ask the questions, "Who am I?" and "What is life about?" in a more philosophical way rather than personal way. They become much more intellectually curious and critical. They ask "bigger questions" and they seek "bigger answers."

B. AFFECTIVE

Most sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are usually physically mature and no longer undergoing significant glandular and hormonal development. Therefore, they begin to feel more secure in terms of their own personality, though they still continue to test it out. They feel secure in that they have escaped from childhood.

C. MORAL

Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds have a need to test out, to experiment, to challenge and to criticize. They want their decisions to be truly their own. This is one of their greatest psychological needs. Because of their need to make their decisions truly their own, the teacher's main task is to supply raw material which the sixteen and seventeen-year-old can examine and digest. The teacher at this stage is not out to prove. Rather the teacher is out to present the Christian interpretation of life. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds must be left free to decide for themselves if they will embrace that life.

D. SOCIAL

Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are usually capable of sustaining interpersonal relationships on an increasingly altruistic basis.

E. FAITH

For the first time in their lives sixteen and seventeen-year-olds begin to ask authentically religious questions. They can be very demanding in their quest for absolutes and quick to demand a specific stand on an issue. They are also hypercritical of anything they feel is a compromise with the good, the true or the beautiful. They are psychologically revolutionaries because they will not tolerate the imperfection they can detect in existing structures, including the Church. This idealism should be nurtured. Time and the life experience will temper (hopefully, not destroy) their zeal for perfection. Religious education at this age must not become defensive in the face of this critical attitude in sixteen and seventeen-year-olds. In fact, their fresh experience of being human can re-awaken the teacher's enthusiasm. The most important qualities of teachers at this level are patience and humility: patience with the unfair criticism, and humility in admitting that occasionally, perhaps often, they are right. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds now have at least tentative answers about who they are personally. They want to know who humanity is and what is humanity's destiny.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NCD, #179)

TWELFTH GRADE

At some point a person must face the personal vocational decisions which will eventually have to be made. These decisions should lead to an experience of conversion to adult faith. Understanding the key tenets and practices of the Catholic faith and the responsibilities one will have as an adult Christian facilitates that conversion. (See~, #1691)

FACTORS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (AGES 17-18)

A. COGNITIVE

By the time people have reached seventeen or eighteen, they have gathered quite a bit of information about themselves and have formed a rather clear though still tentative self-image. At the same time they have gathered considerable experiential and theoretical information about life, the problems it encompasses and the satisfactions it offers. Their ability to think as adults allows them to be profound if they so choose.

B. AFFECTIVE

Physically mature and no longer undergoing significant glandular and hormonal development, seventeen and eighteen-year-olds are entering the peak period of their life in terms of energy, stamina, and coordination. They are psychologically and physically on the threshold of adulthood.

C. MORAL

At this point in their development seventeen and eighteen-year-olds are ready for a more mature commitment and a more mature self-direction of their life. However, they can easily revert to a kind of childhood aimlessness. This is not so much an indictment of youth as it is a symptom of a major cultural sickness in our society and that of the entire Western world. There is a cultural influence which disrupts the normal development of seventeen and eighteen year olds, namely the uncertainty about society's future and about the values that society

presents to them. This is one of the major reasons why many seventeen and eighteen year olds become drop outs, runaways or rebels, gravitating to one or another of the extreme cultural movements of today.

D. SOCIAL

For the seventeen and eighteen year old the basic question becomes, "What should I do with this self, with these talents and these physical capacities I possess?" It is not always asked that clearly. Some may not have developed to this point, but the chief characteristic of seventeen and eighteen-year-olds will be concern for their personal future, a future they want to be both meaningful and satisfying. Two cultural influences are presently at work, however, which complicate this picture of the seventeen and eighteen-year-old. First, though they are physically and emotionally ready to dedicate themselves to a significant life task, they experience at the same time the need for additional education if they are to be successful in terms of society's standards. This training may include six to eight years of additional schooling in some profession. With this comes the logical conclusion to postpone marriage and their continued economic dependence upon parents. Both of these tend to postpone the maturing processes and prolong the adolescent feeling of alienation from adult society and consequent irresponsibility toward its standards and values. For this reason it is sometimes quite difficult to get seventeen and eighteen-year-olds to take the question of their personal future seriously.

E. FAITH

Seventeen and eighteen-year-olds do have the capacity and natural inclination to begin to make important decisions about the shape their adult life will take. But they are anxious in the face of the highly competitive and unstable society they must enter and they are often frustrated with the fact that they may have to continue in the role of student and remain dependent for several more years. The Good News of the Gospel should be presented in an adult manner so that young people can discover how it can give direction to their entire future, and to invite them to full participation in the life of the Church.

The characteristics typical of this stage will be more or less intense according to an individual's physical and emotional attributes, home influences, previous experiences, and cultural background. (NCD, #179).

***For Curriculum for Ninth – Twelve Grades please refer to
The Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework:***

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/upload/high-school-curriculum-framework.pdf>

***For the ADAPTATION FOR USE IN PARISH AND YOUTH MINISTRY
PROGRAMS:***

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/upload/high-school-curriculum-framework-adaptation-of-preamble-2.pdf>

Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living

Catholic youth are encouraged to cherish their dignity as a human being made in God's image and likeness and to cherish others in that same dignity of personhood. These guiding principles and curriculum guidelines are meant to help the youth of our Diocese deepen their relationship with Christ and the Church through joyfully embracing the call to love and live chaste lives either as a married follower of Christ or as a celibate person. Our purpose is to focus on the moral religious foundations of the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are guided by the Holy Spirit and the relational love witnessed through the Holy Trinity and thus as followers of Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, we are called to live and share in this same love of the Triune God.

Faithful to Jesus' teaching and call we urge those charged with the catechesis of our young people namely Parents/ Guardians and Catechists, to embrace the catechetical call of Chaste Living by witnessing and teaching the importance of the sacramental life of the church, the cultivation of the Cardinal and Theological Virtues, The Ten Commandments, and the Beatitudes.

Curriculum Guidelines for Chaste-Living

Guiding Principles

1. Human beings are created in God's own image and created for love.
2. Individually human beings reflect creation in the image and likeness of God by having an intellect, free will, and the capacity of making truly human and moral acts.
3. Being created in God's image enables human beings to share in Trinitarian love, express love in marriage through generating new life, and through selfless giving.
4. Grace and friendship with God was lost through a free act of disobedience called Original Sin.
5. The effects of Original Sin are:
 - a. loss of Grace
 - b. damage to the harmony of body, intellect and will
 - c. reduced ability to love unselfishly
 - d. experience of Shame
 - e. confusion about the nature and purpose of the human body
 - f. being subject to temptation to sin
 - g. death
6. God didn't abandon human beings.
7. God sent Jesus to accomplish our redemption.
8. Jesus knows us and loves us.
9. Jesus taught us how to live and gave us the gift of new life through the Holy Spirit.
10. Christian morality consists in following Jesus, being transformed by His grace and renewed in His mercy.
11. Moral formation involves a journey of interior transformation and conversion to Christ.

12. We do not lead the moral life on our own. God helps and transforms us by the power of grace.
13. A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do what is right and good.
14. The cardinal virtues are acquired by effort as a result of education, deliberate acts, and perseverance in repeated morally good acts. All human virtues are related to the cardinal virtues.
15. The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity. They aid humans to grow in a generous and self-giving love that is foundational for a chaste life.
16. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit complete and perfect the virtues.
17. Christ's gift of salvation offers humans the grace to maintain moral balance and persevere in the pursuit of the virtues.
18. The glory of salvation is experienced through the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.
19. The Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the Four Precepts of the Church instruct us in how humans are to live and act in union with God.
20. Chastity is a virtue that allows us to do right, good and loving acts in the area of relationship and sexuality.
21. Chastity promotes the full integration of sexuality in accord with a person's state of life. Chastity promotes abstention from immoral sexual activity.
22. Chastity includes training in human freedom and the result of hard personal work and interior work.
23. Chastity flows from the moral virtue of temperance that helps direct our sexuality and sexual desires toward authentic love. It is not a repression of sexual feelings but is the successful integration of the gift of sexuality.
24. Christ's disciples need to be aware of and resist temptation to engage in activities which are violations of chastity. These violations are sinful.
25. For any who fail to live chaste lives, forgiveness is given through Christ in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We need God's grace to help us live a chaste life.

26. Conjugal love between a husband and wife is part of God's plan for humanity. It is a mutual gift of self. Married people are called to love in conjugal chastity; un-married people are called to live in a chastity of continence.
27. Pornography defames the intimacy of the marital act and injures the dignity of God's people.
28. The unity of the spouse and the gift of life go together through the marital act. Any sexual activity outside the marriage defames the sanctity of marriage. (i.e. premarital sex, extramarital sex and cohabitation)
29. The unity of a couple shown through the marital act is manifested in creating new life. Therefore no means should be used to discourage procreation such as artificial birth control. If a couple is not able to conceive a child no artificial means of conception are allowed since it is the conjugal act of love that results in the gift of new life.
30. The existence of homosexual tendencies is not sinful; however acting upon these tendencies in homosexual acts is contrary to chastity, natural law and is closed to the gift of life. In this same manner same sex marriages do not contain the elements essential to God's plan for marriage and therefore lack the benefit of a sacramental covenant and the ability to generate new life.
31. The Blessed Mother, through prayer and devotion, will assist people in living a chaste life.

Curriculum Guidelines

Kindergarten

- God created all kinds of families
- God gave each person a loving heart
- God created all things
- God wants each person to grow and learn
- God created boys and girls alike and different
- A baby is a gift from God to families
- Friends are gifts from God
- Jesus teaches us how to love and help others
- Homes and families are places where we can be safe and happy
- Families teach us to love
- Learning to talk to parents builds trust and develops loving relationships
- Children learn to stop inappropriate behavior

Curriculum Guidelines

1st Grade

- There is a difference between loving, life-giving words and cruel, ugly words
- God created people in God's image and likeness
- God wants people in a family to help each other, care for each other, and love each other
- God created everyone with feelings
- God gave everyone five senses to help them learn
- Love grows when we share love with others
- Love takes work

Curriculum Guidelines

2nd Grade

- God is present with each person in the family
- The Ten commandments are God's rules
- God has given everyone gifts to share
- New life is a gift from God
- Sacraments are signs of love between God and us
- God is with us in happy and sad times
- We learn how to communicate respectfully
- We learn about signs of affection and the need for privacy
- The sacrament of Reconciliation is God's forgiving mercy and makes us new again

Curriculum Guidelines

3rd Grade

- Modesty is a virtue of gentleness and goodness
- We learn to express feelings and basic human emotions
- We learn skills and qualities which help build healthy Christian relationships
- There are different qualities of love
- God created man and woman to love one another as husband and wife
- God's love is unlimited
- God created us with the ability to think, imagine, and choose
- Living things are signs of God's love
- God wants new life to be protected and kept safe
- God gives us free will to choose and care for creation
- God wants us to make good choices

Curriculum Guidelines

4th Grade

- God created us to live in communion with God and one another
- Jesus is fully human and fully divine
- God gave us the gift of conscience to help us choose right from wrong
- God created us with a unique body and a unique soul
- Purity of heart comes from modesty and right judgment
- The Great Commandment to love our neighbor is inseparable from love of God
- God calls us to proclaim the Gospel according to our vocation
- As we grow older, our bodies change and mature. We are becoming the person God plans for us to become
- We have respect for ourselves and this is essential for developing a healthy sexual identity
- Chastity is a gift from God
- There are different kinds of relationships
- We learn about God's call to holiness

Curriculum Guidelines

5th Grade

- The family is an icon or image of the Church
- Families become stronger when members respect each other
- The Church helps us to know and live by truth
- Grace helps us to freely choose what is true, good, and beautiful
- Human life is to be respected because life is sacred
- Parents have the responsibility to care for their children
- God created men and women equal in dignity and complementary in gender
- To help students understand and appreciate the physical difference between male and female as a gift from God
- To understand the physical, spiritual, and emotional changes taking place during puberty
- To help students understand the changes that come with adolescence and these changes are meant by God to be steps to a full and rich life
- Marriage is a sacred relationship between a man and woman
- The Church as the Body of Christ is strengthened through communal support
- To help students understand what friendship is and why it is a gift
- To begin to help students focus on and discern the influences, positive and negative, that media has in determining values, morality, and sexuality

Curriculum Guidelines

6th Grade

- Unity comes in and with the Church
- Compatibility of science and faith
- Chastity respects the unity of the person
- Human life begins at conception
- To explain the development of the child inside the womb during the nine months of pregnancy
- Every human being is a person with dignity
- The body is sacred; all parts are sacred and should be respected
- To realize that life is important and that God has a role in our life
- Christ is our example and gives us genuine love and that God calls us to genuine love
- To encourage students to develop a clear set of Christian values
- To create an understanding and appreciation for the gift of male and female in the cycle of life
- To develop a respect for the reproductive abilities of the human body and it's connection to family life

Curriculum Guidelines

7th Grade

- Free will allows us to say yes to God
- Spiritual maturity means becoming like Jesus
- Honor the dignity of each person
- Loving relationships are to reflect the loving communion of the Trinity
- Chastity is integrating our sexuality into life and love
- God created us to share love
- God created us to live in community
- The body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, therefore students are taught to show respect for their bodies by not abusing them through sex, drugs, or alcohol
- Teach the importance of striving for honest, open communication in relationships with others
- To stress the value that life begins at conception
- Students learn to make good, moral decisions using principles based on Catholic moral teachings
- An understanding of how to appropriately express emotions
- An appreciation that gender plays a critical role in life
- An understanding of the importance of the virtue of chastity and the role of chastity in developing healthy attitudes about sexuality in living a moral life
- To develop an understanding of right to life issues and the issue of abortion

Curriculum Guidelines

8th Grade

- God has given us a natural desire for happiness
- Using free will and informed conscience we can choose to follow the right path
- The Theological virtue of hope opens a person to desire and expect the promises of happiness from God
- Sin and moral evil are at the root of many threats against human life
- Human sexuality is primarily concerned with our capacity to love and form relationships based on being male and female
- Married love is to be self-giving and life-giving
- God created us as social being
- Life has meaning with a God-given purpose
- To aid students in understanding the Church's teaching on sexual behavior
- To help students understand marriage is unitive and for procreation
- To emphasize teenagers are not ready for parenting
- To learn how chastity directs sexuality to the service of faithful love
- To learn all humans are called to live chaste lives
- To learn the teachings of the Church on pre-marital and extra-marital sex

Curriculum Guidelines

9th Grade

- God created humans in God's image and likeness – male and female
- Because we are made in God's images we respect the dignity of all people
- To be fully human means to fully accept and become the person God created us to be
- God has entrusted creation to us, we are stewards charged with procreating and protecting life
- Jesus reveals the way to conversion, to leave sin behind and live a new life in Jesus and overcome evil
- Jesus teaches us to be single-hearted in our desire for God and to offset the disordered affections and divided hearts with which we live
- Jesus teaches us how to pray and persevere through prayer
- The order and beauty of the natural world point to God as the origin and Creator of life
- The natural law and longing for God's existence
- God shows God's love in creation
- Students should have a correct understanding of human anatomy, reproduction and terminology related to sexuality
- God created us to be happy in this world and the next; unhappiness was caused by people when they did not listen to God.
- The blueprint for happiness and a moral life is found in the Beatitudes

Curriculum Guidelines

10th Grade

- God made humans as male and female
- Stress the dignity of men and woman = similarities and differences
- Humans are both body and soul and reflect the physical and spiritual realities in the world
- The fall from grace is Original Sin
- The consequences of this sin is loss of grace, holiness, justice and temptation to sin
- The Theological virtues of faith, hope and love and the Cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and courage lead us to a chaste life
- The Trinity helps us to live a holy life and respond to God's call to chastity
- Living as a disciple of Jesus means to live a sacramental and prayerful life
- We are called to live a life formed in right conscience through conversion of heart and mind
- We are called to put Jesus' moral and spiritual teaching into practice
- God calls each person to a vital relationship with God through prayer
- Developing intimacy and communion with Jesus through prayer is an essential aspect of life in Christ
- Every moral choice a person makes effects the person and society
- The end never justifies the mean
- God calls us to holiness through Jesus and the Holy Spirit
- To teach the understanding that a life of holiness is lived out through a person's vocation- ordained, consecrated, married or single
- Ordained and consecrated persons and those called to the single life live a life of holiness by living a chaste, celibate life
- Married people live a life of holiness through a chaste, conjugal love

Curriculum Guidelines

11th Grade

- Students understand marriage as life-long covenantal communion of love in union with the Trinity
- The effects of the sacramental union between a man and woman is the grace to continue in this love and openness to children
- The students learn that sacramental marriage is in-dissolvable
- Marriage implies fidelity to conjugal love and the gift of children through this love
- The 6th Commandment teaches us how to live a chaste and moral life
- We all have a vocation to chastity
- The 9th Commandment stresses respect for marriage and chastity
- The students learn the Church's teaching on forming a moral conscience
- Students learn that sexually transmitted diseases, homosexual activities, lust, and pornography can be the results of living an unchaste life and can result in a sinful life
- Students learn that the Sacrament of Reconciliation restores life in Jesus

Curriculum Guidelines

12th Grade

- Vocation is a universal call to holiness as disciples of Jesus Christ
- Students explore vocation choices and vocation choices in relation to chastity
- Students will further explore the virtues and the effect on a chaste life
- Students will further explore the gift and fruits of the Holy Spirit and the effect on a chaste life
- Students will learn to apply conscience formation to Christian Living as young adults
- Students will explore the effects of sin, the reality of sin, and the avoidance of sin as sin relates to abortion, pornography, abuse, etc.
- Students will learn as young adults the dignity of human life and the importance of the responsibility of living a chaste life
- Students learn marriage is a sacrament given to foster the good of society through fostering family life and values
- Marriage is life-long commitment between a man and woman that reflects the Trinity's love and union

Resources

1. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, 1973
2. United States Catholic Conference, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994
3. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops , *Adaptation of Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*, 2011
4. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living*, 2011
5. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops , *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*, 2007
6. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *General Directory for Catechesis*, 1998
7. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *National Directory for Catechesis*, 2005
8. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Protocol for Assessing the Conformity of Catechetical Materials*, 1997