

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM CONCEPTS

Grade 8

By the end of Grade 8, students will have an age-appropriate understanding of the concepts in each of the following areas:

Area #1: ***The Profession of Faith*** (CCC #26-1065)

1. The Holy Spirit is in the Church and communicates to us, through Baptism, the life that originates in the Father and is offered to us in the Son (CCC# 683)
2. The Church's mission is a sacrament of the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit (CCC# 738)
3. Through the sacraments, Christ communicates his Holy and sanctifying Spirit to the members of his Body, the Church (CCC# 739)
4. The word "church" comes from the Greek for "convocation" or "assembly." In the Old Testament this word was used to describe the People of God assembled in prayer (CCC# 751)
5. In Christian usage, the word "church" refers to a) the liturgical assembly convened, above all, by the Eucharist, b) the local community, and c) the universal community of believers (CCC# 752)
6. The Church is both divine and human, it is a visible community but at its depth it is the Mystical Body of Christ on earth (CCC# 771)
7. Upon entering the Church through Baptism, one receives a share in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and royal offices (CCC# 783-786)
8. Christ is the head of the Body, which is the Church (CCC# 787-792)
9. The Church is marked by four characteristics:
 - i. **"One"** The Holy Spirit unites all members of the Church, in all their diversity, into one communion of love, faith and service. The unity of Christians is a reflection of the unity among the persons of the Trinity (CCC# 813-822)
 - ii. **"Holy"** United with Christ, the Church is made holy by his Spirit. The sanctity of the Church is limited and imperfect, although the saints serve as models of holiness to which all Christians aspire (CCC# 823-829)
 - iii. **"Catholic"** In the Church is the fullness of the means of salvation. This call to membership in the People of God goes out to all people of all races and cultures (CCC# 830-838)

- iv. **“Apostolic”** The Church was founded by the Apostles chosen by Christ himself, with the Holy Spirit the Apostles’ successors (the Pope and the bishops) hands on the teaching of the faith received from Christ. Like the Apostles all members of the Church are “sent out” into the world for its sanctification (CCC# 857-865)
10. The Church exists on three levels: a) the living here on earth, b) those who have died and are now in Purgatory preparing for the eternal encounter with God in Heaven, and c) the saints in Heaven who are united with God and who continue to pray for us. This is known as the “communion of saints” (CCC# 954-959)
11. The Blessed Mother, because she is the mother of Jesus, because of the role she played aiding the Church’s beginnings, because she is the first and pre-eminent disciple is called the “Mother of the Church” (CCC# 964-972)
12. The mission of the Church in all times is to announce to humanity God’s forgiveness through Christ and to call all people to conversion and faith in God (CCC# 981-983)

Area #2: ***The Celebration of the Christian Mystery*** (CCC #1066-1690)

1. Christ now lives and acts in and with his Church. He is always present in his Church and acts through the sacraments (CCC# 1076, 1088)
2. Christ’s redemptive suffering, death and resurrection are celebrated and experienced by the faithful in every celebration of the sacraments (CCC# 1085)
3. Christ entrusted his apostles with his work of bringing people to holiness, their successors (the bishops), through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, continue this mission in every age (CCC# 1086-1087)
4. There are seven sacraments in the Church: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony (CCC# 1113)
5. Sunday is the preeminent day for the liturgical assembly to listen to the Word of God and take part in the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life (CCC# 1167)
6. In the liturgical year the various aspects of the one Paschal mystery unfold. This is also the case with the cycle of feasts surrounding the mystery of the incarnation (Annunciation, Christmas, and Epiphany) (CCC# 1171)
7. The celebration of the saints and martyrs during the liturgical year proclaims the Paschal mystery in those who have lived the gospel to a heroic degree (CCC# 1173)

Area #3: ***Life in Christ*** (CCC #1691-2550)

1. Human persons are endowed with immortal and spiritual souls; they are made in God’s image and likeness and find their perfection in seeking and loving what is true and good (CCC# 1702-1705)

2. Enticed by the Evil One the first parents abused their freedom at the beginning of human history. Human beings still desire the good, but their nature bears the wound of original sin; they are inclined to evil and subject to error (CCC# 1707)
3. By his Passion, Christ delivered us from Satan and from sin. He won for us new life in the Holy Spirit and his grace restores what sin had damaged in us (CCC# 1708)
4. The Beatitudes teach us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or any human achievement—however beneficial it may be (such as science, technology, or art)—but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love (CCC# 1723)
5. The Sermon on the Mount describes for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of Heaven (CCC# 1724)
6. The Pope and the bishops have been entrusted by Christ to teach with authority to teach the faithful the truth to be believed, the charity to practice, and the happiness with God to hope for (CCC# 2030-2040)
7. The moral life is a response to God’s love. Obeying God’s commandments, especially Jesus’ Great Commandment, are the principal ways we show love to God and to others (CCC# 2062-2067)
8. Social Justice can be achieved by first respecting the God-given dignity and equality of each person (CCC# 1928-1929, 1934-1935)
9. It is the Church’s role to remind all people, especially those in authority over others, of the legitimate rights of the human person --especially the right to life as well as the means necessary for living it with dignity (CCC# 1930-1931)
10. Although legislation can help alleviate the damage done by fear, prejudice, and un-Christian attitudes, only the conversion of hearts in which people recognize each other as “neighbors” can lead to the establishment of just and harmonious societies (CCC# 1931)
11. A key characteristic of a just person is their compassion for the disadvantaged (CCC# 1932)
12. “Liberation” is incompatible with hatred of one’s enemy as a person, but not with hatred of the evil that he/she does as an enemy (CCC# 1933)
13. Economic social disparity between individuals and societies undermines social justice and peace among peoples. Christians are called to build just societies by addressing these inequalities and by building “solidarity” among all people (CCC# 1938-1942)
14. Students will learn about and develop ways of enacting the following:

a. The Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked

- Visit those in prison
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Bury the dead

b. The Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Admonish sinners
- Teach the ignorant
- Give advice to the doubtful
- Comfort those who suffer
- Be patient with others
- Forgive injuries
- Pray for the living and the dead

Area #4: **Christian Prayer** (CCC #2558-2856)

1. Through his prayer life, Jesus teaches us how to pray: alone and with others, silently and aloud, in synagogues and the Temple, in private homes and outdoors. He also said prayers of praise, thanksgiving, lamentation, and petition (CCC# 2601-2604, 2626-2643)
2. Mary's prayers, her trust in God and her willingness to do God's will, serve as a model for Christians (CCC# 2617-2619)
3. Through prayer the Christian grows in faith, hope and charity (CCC# 2656-2658)
4. In the "communion of saints" we learn how to pray in various ways from the example of holy men and women throughout our history, and we have confidence that the saints pray for us in Heaven (CCC# 2683-2684)
5. Christian prayer can take many forms:
 - a. Vocal Prayer**
Saying traditional prayers that all Catholics remember or engaging in informal conversation with God
 - b. Meditation**
Thinking about and reflecting on how God is present to us in the many situations in which we find ourselves,
 - c. Contemplation**
Simply being quiet and listening to God or enjoying being in God's presence
6. Sometimes it is very difficult to pray. It requires effort, especially when we are distracted, feel that God is not listening to us, or when God does not answer our prayers in the way we would like (CCC# 2725-2737)

7. Prayer is a vital necessity for the Christian life; it allows the Holy Spirit to help us be free of sin so that we can love and serve God and others (CCC# 2744-2745)
8. The Lord's Prayer (the "Our Father") is the summary of the whole gospel and serves as the central prayer of the Church (CCC# 2761, 2776)
9. In addition to the prayers they have already learned, Grade 8 students will continue to learn the following
 - a. Students will compose prayers of praise, thanksgiving, remorse, and petition
 - b. Celebrations of the Liturgical Year will continue in class. These should include Marian feasts/holy days and other saints' feasts
 - c. The parts of the Mass and its major prayers and rituals
 - d. Students will take a leadership role in the planning and celebration of liturgies as well as morning/afternoon prayer