

Parents' Guide to Diocesan Faith Formation Curriculum Grade 7

'God's love is communicated to infants and young children primarily through parents.' Parents have shared the gift of human life with their children, and through Baptism have enriched them with a share in God's own life. Parents are the primary educators [of their children] in the faith. (NDC, 203 & 101)

What exactly is the Diocesan Faith Formation Curriculum?

- *A document that clearly states what participants in parish faith formation programs and Catholic elementary school religion classes should be able to know, understand, and do at each grade level.*

What is the aim of this guide?

- The primary aim of this guide is to support parents as the first teachers of their children in their faith.
- To serve as tool for communicating the content for each age/grade level of children to parents.
- To provide some suggestions for integrating faith practices in their homes.

How is it organized?

- The curriculum is organized according to the six tasks of Catechesis, referred to as the **Six Key Elements** of a lived Catholic Faith; while always remembering that the outcome for catechesis is *growing in relationship with Christ*.

These six key elements are:

- Knowledge of the faith;
- Liturgy and Sacraments;
- Morality;
- Prayer;
- Education for Living in the Christian Community;
- Evangelization and Apostolic Life.

For Each Element

- There are standards or broad headings. All these standards should be covered in every program for adults, youth and children.

For Each Standard

- Each standard in turn has age appropriate indicators or knowledge, skills or behavior.
- These indicators will guide instruction and activities in faith formation programs and classrooms.

What do the different fonts mean?

- **Core items that must be covered in all parish and school programs are in bold print.**

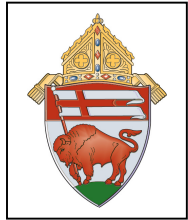
– *Enrichment items that are optional and can be covered if there is time are in italics.*

What is meant by words being underlined?

- Underlining means this is a vocabulary word to know. When a simpler age appropriate definition is needed it is within the indicator itself.

CHILD PROTECTION: SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

Diocesan policy requires that a session on Safe Environment is offered to all children in our parish and school programs at the start of each program year. More information can be found on the Diocesan website and should be shared by parish catechetical leaders and principals with families at the beginning of each year.



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Key Element I: Knowledge of the Faith **– What We Believe**

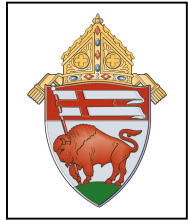
“Sacred Scripture has a preeminent position in catechesis because Sacred Scripture “presents God’s own Word in unalterable form” and “makes the voice of the Holy Spirit resound again and again in the words of the prophets and apostles.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church is intended to complement Sacred Scripture. Together with Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture constitutes the supreme rule of faith.” (NDC no. 24)

At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of the **Knowledge of the Faith** in your home: Parents of primary-grade children provide the most powerful influence on forming the faith of their children by living out their own faith with consistency and joy. Children experience God’s loving presence in the everyday care and nurturing provided by parents. Families can also engage in primary-age actions and discussions of the Catholic faith. When children hear about the faith but do not see it lived out, they question its importance.

Standard 1 **CREED:** Understand, believe and proclaim the Triune and redeeming God as revealed in creation and human experience, in Apostolic Tradition and Sacred Scripture, and as entrusted to the teaching office of the Church.

- Explain what it means to say that God’s revelation is "economic": i.e., that God reveals himself over time and in human history.**
- Identify God’s revelation as the foundation of our faith as Christians.**
- Know that the Church continues to interpret the Word of God whether in written form or in the form of Tradition.**
- Show understanding that faith is a gift from God helping us to respond to God’s revelation to us.*
- Describe how faith is both a personal relationship with God and a free assent to the truth God has revealed.**
- Identify faith as reasonable and certain.*
- Show understanding that faith is a gift that we receive from God through the Church.*
- State how we as a Church profess our faith together and to the world.**
- Describe the natural ways of coming to know God: the world and the human person.**
- List the following characteristics of God: eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.*
- Articulate that the central mystery of the Christian faith is the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.**
- State that the Divine Persons are relative to one another.*
- State that each of the Divine Persons is wholly and entirely God.*
- Describe the Trinity as a complete unity without confusing the Persons or dividing the substance of God.**
- State understanding that although God is named Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God has no gender.*
- State that the Catholic faith is one and the same everywhere and expressed uniquely in many cultures.**
- Express the belief in the resurrection of the dead as essential to Christianity.**
- State that we have already risen with Christ in Baptism and participate in the life of the Risen Christ.*
- Describe how the Holy Spirit worked through Mary to prepare the way for the Incarnation.*
- State the belief that all the faithful in Christ, living and dead, form the Communion of Saints.**



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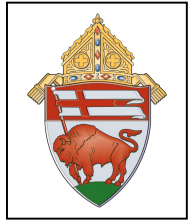
Standard 2 SACRED SCRIPTURE: Read, comprehend and articulate salvation history as conveyed in God's revelation through Sacred Scripture.

- Show understanding of God's revealing word in Sacred Scripture as unfolding throughout the Old and New Testaments.
- State the meaning of **divine inspiration** in relationship to biblical authorship.
- Differentiate between divinely inspired truth and literal fact when interpreting Sacred Scripture.
- Recognize that the Bible has both divine and human authorship initiated by God to reveal the truths God intends.
- State that the Church identifies 73 books in the canon of Scripture.
- Describe the Church as having the authority to teach and interpret Sacred Scripture.
- Recognize that God's **covenant** with the Chosen People of the Old Testament was a call to be holy.
- State the meaning of the "**Shema**" of Israel. (See Dt. 6:4-5)
- Describe the significance of the **temple** in Jerusalem to the Jews.
- State the relationship between Jews and **Gentiles** in first century Palestine.
- Show familiarity with the Gospel of Luke by sharing favorite parables from this Gospel. (Lk 5-8, 10, 12, 13-16)
- Identify the Gospel of Luke as a **synoptic** gospel.
- Identify how the Gospel of Luke incorporates conflict in the narrative. (Lk 19-22)
- State the differences in the **prologue** of Luke's (Lk 1-2) gospel from both Mark (Mk 1:1-13) and Matthew (Mt 1-2)
- Describe the **Infancy Narrative** in Luke and its difference from Matthew's account. (Lk 1:1-2:40; Mt 1:18-2:23)
- State the significance of the Temple scenes in the Infancy Narrative of Luke.
- Describe how Jesus prepares for his public ministry. (Lk 3:21-4:13)
- Describe the ministry in Galilee and Jesus' sensitivity to the needs of others, especially the poor. (Lk 4:14ff)
- Recognize Luke's Gospel as a narrative: Jesus' journey to Jerusalem.
- Recognize in Luke's Gospel Jesus' teaching ministry during his journey to Jerusalem as authoritative and prophetic, particularly in the material unique to Luke in chapters 9-19.
- Describe the Resurrection narrative in the Gospel of Luke as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises and Jewish **messianic** hopes.
- Describe major themes of the Gospel of Luke (salvation is a joyful surprise; salvation includes everyone; special concern for the poor and needy; Mary as the first disciple.)
- Identify the role and significance of women in the Gospel of Luke. (Elizabeth [Lk 1] , Mary, Anna [Lk 2:36-38] women healed, women as good examples, witnesses to cross [23:27;49] and resurrection [Lk 24-1-11], etc.)
- State that the Gospel of Luke shows the universal mission of Jesus extending from Old Testament promises to the Jews to include the Gentiles.
- Recognize how the Gospel of Luke shows Jesus' compassion for Jerusalem and the Temple. (Lk 19:41-47)
- Identify the figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke as son of Adam, son of Abraham, son of David and son of God (Lk 3:23-38).

Key Element II: Liturgy and Sacraments

- How We Celebrate

"Faith and worship are as closely related to one another as they were in the early Church: faith gathers the community for worship, and worship renews the faith of the community... In her Liturgy, the Church celebrates what she professes and lives above all the Paschal Mystery, by which Christ accomplished the work of our salvation." (NDC no. 32)



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At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of the **Liturgy and Sacraments** in your home: *Parents educate and prepare the primary child for first celebration of the sacraments of Penance and reconciliation and Eucharist by connecting daily experiences to Gospel teachings and their own experience of these sacraments. Families participate at Sunday Mass with the parish community and discuss the meaning of symbols. Simply talking about the readings from Mass is a powerful tool to begin to engage your child more in the liturgy.*

Standard 3 SACRAMENTS: Understand and participate in the sacraments of the Church as effective signs of God's grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church.

- Describe how Christians participate in the priesthood of Christ, especially through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.
- Discuss the common Baptism of all Christians as a sign of communion.
- Describe the Sacrament of Confirmation and the elements of laying on of hands and sealing with oil of [chrism](#).
- Describe the [validity](#) of Sacrament of Matrimony under the following conditions: baptized man and woman, free [consent](#), intention to fulfill [contract](#) for good of spouses and possibility of children.
- Recognize the spouses as the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony through the expression of their marriage [vows](#).
- Describe the validity of the Sacrament of Holy Orders for men who are baptized, prepared through [seminary](#) education, and called by their bishop to be ordained.
- Identify and describe the three ranks of [Holy Orders](#): [episcopate](#), [presbyterate](#), and [diaconate](#).
- Identify the priesthood as an apostolic call that comes from Jesus Christ, commissioning the apostles to continue to do the work of the Church.

Standard 4 LITURGY: Understand and celebrate the liturgical rites of the Church as expressed in the liturgy year and epitomized in the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.

- Describe why every Catholic has the obligation to attend Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation.
- Compare/contrast another rite with the Latin Rite, showing catholicity of the Church.
- Explain that Christ, acting through the ministry of the priest, offers himself in the Eucharistic sacrifice at every Mass.
- Describe that the validity of the Mass requires a bishop or his authorized representative (the priest) to officiate at the Mass.
- Describe how feasts of Mary and the saints are incorporated into the liturgical cycle.
- Describe the funeral Mass as a special liturgy of blessing and farewell to the Christian who has died.
- Indicate how Catholics are called to the [liturgical ministries](#).

Key Element III: Morality - How We Live

"Christ is the norm of morality." Christian morality consists in following Jesus Christ, in abandoning oneself to him, in letting oneself be transformed by his grace and renewed by his mercy, gifts which come to us in the living communion of his Church." (NDC no. 42)

At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of **Morality** in your home: *Parents are responsible for forming a child's conscience through age*



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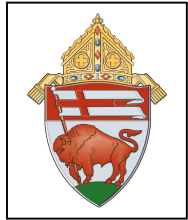
appropriate instruction in right and wrong actions. Children will also notice the actions of their parents and other responsible adults and ask why they acted how they did. Parents have the opportunity to shape their child's view of the world and actions of people.

Standard 5 **Conscience:** Develop a moral conscience informed by church teachings.

- Describe what is meant by: "The dignity of the human person is the foundation of Catholic Christian morality."**
- Explain that we identify moral values in the teachings and life of Jesus.**
- State the meaning of **natural law** as the ability to know right from wrong as inscribed in the human heart.*
- Differentiate between **original sin, personal sin** and **social sin**.**
- Identify conscience as a judgment of reason that helps us to see the moral quality of an action.*
- Describe the lifelong formation of the conscience.*
- Name and practically apply the Theological and Cardinal Virtues.**
- Identify the **Fruits of the Holy Spirit** as signs of the Christian life. (Gal 5:22-23)*
- Engage in moral decision-making.*
- Show how the Beatitudes provide the foundation for understanding the moral teaching of Jesus.**
- Analyze the relationship between race, prejudice and institutional **racism** as **social sin**.**
- Identify the seven **Capital Sins (deadly sins)** as: pride, avarice, envy, anger, gluttony, lust, and sloth.*

Standard 6 **Christian Living:** Understand and live the moral teachings of the Church through a life of discipleship in Jesus Christ expressed in love for God, conversion, positive self-image, personal integrity, social justice, the dignity of the human person and love of neighbor.

- Show an understanding that Christian discipleship requires following Jesus Christ as the way, the truth and the life.**
- Recognize how the Incarnation of Jesus provides a key for understanding the central principal of the dignity of the human person.**
- State the importance of Christians taking an active part in public life and promoting the common good.**
- Show an understanding that the good of the human person is the purpose of society.*
- State how stewardship is important to the spiritual life of the parish.*
- State opportunities to practice stewardship in the parish.*
- State the principles of the social teaching of the Church.**
- Identify gifts (time, talents, and treasures) that you have received in your family, and describe what it means to be a good steward of these gifts in the family.*
- Describe world peace as the work of justice and the effect of charity.**
- Understand that Jesus' mission and ministry are continued today through the ministries of the word, worship, community building, and service.*
- Acknowledge and affirm the dignity of the human person and community.**
- Understand that our Church is enriched through diverse cultural expressions; research different cultures to find examples of this diversity.*
- Give examples of how we can model Jesus' life of service in our relationships with others in our lives.*
- Explain with examples how the principles of **Catholic Social Teaching (social justice)** inform and critique personal and societal situations*
- Discuss how the Beatitudes challenge us to continual conversion in our personal and social lives.*
- Engage in service to the community (i.e., family, parish, local, national, and global) in response to the Gospel call.*
- Understand that Jesus taught us about carrying a cross and living a life of loving service**
- Articulate how service is an essential element of discipleship.*



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- Understand that service is action rooted in and flowing from prayer.

Key Element IV: Prayer

- How We Pray

“God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer” (CCC no. 1075). His initiative comes first; the human response to his initiative is itself prompted by the grace of the Holy Spirit... In prayer, the Holy Spirit not only reveals the identity of the Triune God to human persons but also reveals the identity of human persons to themselves. (NDC no. 34)

At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of **Prayer** in your home: *Families help children memorize traditional prayers such as the Our Father and Hail Mary through daily repetition. The family prays together regularly at mealtime, bedtime, and special seasonal observances and to commemorate significant life events. The model of a parent in prayer can be the most inspiring catechesis on prayer a child will receive.*

Standard 7 PRAYER: Know and participate in the Catholic tradition of prayer and acknowledge prayer as the primary way we deepen our knowledge of God in the community

- **Examine our relationship with God through personal prayer in light of the call of all disciples of Jesus to conversion, to repentance and to become like Christ.**
- *Explain how prayer provides a deepening awareness of our covenant relationship with God.*
- *Explain which psalm is your favorite and why.*
- **Affirm that worship belongs to God alone.**
- **Recognize the [Liturgy of the Eucharist](#) as the community's central act of [worship](#).**
- **Recognize prayer using scripture**
- **Identify and examine the elements of the [Lord's Prayer](#).**
- **Illustrate how the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary come from [Sacred Scripture](#).**
- *Discuss the concept and need for openness and a generous response to God's call in our lives: [vocation](#).*
- *Identify how the Gospel affirms and challenges our thoughts and actions.*
- **Outline the steps for [Lectio Divina](#).**

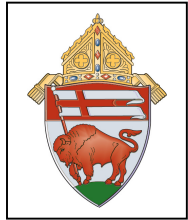
*Please note that the full texts of the prayers and practices for Catholics to teach your child are found in the online glossary and also in a downloadable document online: Appendix 2 **KEY PRACTICES AND PRAYERS FOR CATHOLICS**.*

Key Element V: Education for Living in the Christian Community - How We Live in the Community, the Church

“We were created as social beings who find fulfillment only in love – for God and for our neighbor. If we are truly to gaze upon him who is the source of our joy, we need to do so as members of the people of God (cf. Spe Salvi no. 14). If this seems counter-cultural, that is simply further evidence of the urgent need for a renewed evangelization of culture.” (Benedict XVI – 16 April 2008 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception)”

At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of **Education for Living in the Christian Community** in your home: *Living Christian community life does not happen spontaneously, it must be taught carefully (GDC, 77). Children are like apprentices learning at the feet of the master carpenter, Christ, who has shared this task with parents. Parents model the Christian virtues to their children and how to act in public settings with love and compassion.*



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Standard 8 **CATHOLIC CHURCH:** Understand and appreciate the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ, the community of believers, as expressed in the Church's origin, mission of evangelization, hierarchical structure, marks, charisms, members and the communion of saints.

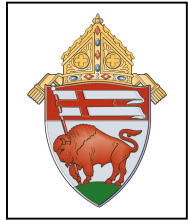
- Show understanding that the Catholic Church gradually is formed in the Christian era in keeping with God's plan.*
- Recognize that the Church is missionary by nature.**
- State that the Church has a special mission to the poor.**
- Show understanding that all the living and dead together form the Communion of Saints in the Church.**
- Locate the part of the [Nicene Creed](#) that describes the Church as [holy](#) and [catholic](#).**
- Recognize that the Church names Mary as Mother of the Church.**
- State the belief that the Church has the power to forgive sins through the sacraments.**
- Articulate understanding of the [Rites](#) of the Catholic Church as an expression of diversity.*
- State that the Rites of the Catholic Church derive from one profession of faith, celebration of the seven sacraments and one hierarchy.**
- Show understanding that a Catholic may fully participate in the liturgies of all the Rites of the Catholic Church.**
- State that the Pope is the head of patriarchs, primates, metropolitans and bishops.*

Standard 9 **ECUMENISM:** Understand and participate in the call of the Church to be a sign of unity in the world through knowledge of and collaboration with other Catholic (Eastern), Orthodox, and Christian churches.

- State how the Roman Catholic Church respects all faith traditions.*
- List the Lutheran, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, and Apostolic churches as some of the churches evolved from the time of the Protestant Reformation.**
- Defend the Pope as the leader of the Catholic Church throughout the world, the successor of the Apostle Peter and a sign of our unity.**
- State that the church is a community of God's people called to continual reform and renewal.*
- Explain that Catholics are called to work and prayer for unity in the Church because Jesus also prayed "that they all may be one".
(Jn 17:20-23)**
- Develop a prayer service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18-25)*
- Explain that our respect for other Christians and faiths does not mean that we deny the fullness of the faith Christ taught is found in the Catholic Church.**
- State that our respect for other Christians means that we can both recognize what we share in common but that we also need to be honest about how we differ.**
- Identify that the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Churches call their diocese an "eparchy"*
- Identify that the Eastern Catholic Churches call their sacraments "[mysteries](#)" and Confirmation, "[chrismation](#)."**

Standard 10 **CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES AND RELATIONSHIPS:** Apply Catholic principles to interpersonal relations.

- Recognize that human rights are based on the equality of all persons resting on their dignity as human persons created in the image and the likeness of God.**
- State the meaning of human sexuality as a gift of God meant for married love between a man and a woman.**



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- Describe human sexuality as being all that makes a person male or female. (physical characteristics and responses, psychological characteristics and emotional responses, social relationships and need for intimacy, intellectual aptitude and attitude, and spiritual perspective)
- Identify the elements of our human sexuality as physical, mental, social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual.
- Connect how one's decisions positively or negatively affect the elements of their human sexuality.
- Analyze what is needed to live a chaste lifestyle.
- Define and differentiate between abstinence, chastity, and celibacy.
- Integrate the meaning of Christian morality with Jesus' teaching, the dignity of the human person and the Incarnation.
- Understand that sexual attraction is part of God's plan to bring about the purposes of marriage -- unity of the spouses and the procreation of children.
- Recognize that every baptized person is called to lead a chaste life no matter what their state in life.
- Recognize that the Christian response to life is that human life has inherent dignity and one should respect life in all its stages.

Standard 11 VOCATION: Understand and undertake discipleship in Christ responding in faith by participating in the mission of the Church through living a specific call in the life of the Church.

- State that the call to religious life in the Church is identified in two forms: active and contemplative.
- Describe how apostolic religious orders provided teachers and catechists for parishes in the United States for over 150 years.
- Examine a variety of Christian vocations as a response to the baptismal call.
- Understand that religious life is a special type of discipleship.

Key Element VI: Evangelization and Apostolic Life

– **How we, as Individuals and Community, Live in Service to the World.**

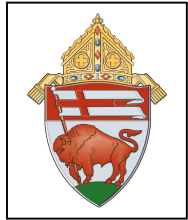
“Only if we are aware of our calling, as individuals and as a community, to be part of God’s family as his sons and daughters, will we be able to generate a new vision and muster new energy in the service of a truly integral humanism. The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God.” (Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate, no. 78)

At-Home Ideas:

At the primary or early elementary school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of **Evangelization and Apostolic Life** in your home: *Parents influence children through the witness of their lived faith expressed in integrity and service. Children are made aware of service and Catholic social teaching through inclusion in service projects when possible. Issues related to justice, peace, respect for life, and other moral issues are discussed routinely around the dinner table or elsewhere at a level understandable to the primary-age child. To make service projects more meaningful for primary children, it is useful to help them process the experience. These projects teach children to think of others and prepare them for serving/ evangelizing others through word and action.*

Standard 12 CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: Know critique and apply social justice and stewardship principles to societal situations in a way that acknowledges and affirms the dignity of the human person and community.

- Explain that human rights are based on the equality of all persons, resting on their dignity, as human persons, created in the image and likeness of God.
- State that the Scriptures teach us the importance of working for justice, peace, equality, and stewardship in our lives.



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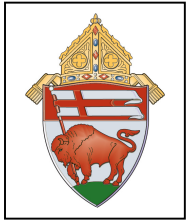
- Define "common good" as the sum total of conditions which allow people as groups or individuals, to reach fulfillment more easily.
- Show understanding that the good of the human person is the purpose of society.
- Recognize that the Christian response to life is recognition of its inherent dignity and a respect for life in all its stages.**
- State how natural law expresses the dignity of the person and is the basis for fundamental rights and duties.
- Show understanding that the Christian life requires preferential love for the poor.**
- State the conditions for abortion being a grave sin and the need for reconciliation and healing.**

Standard 13 INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: Understand and participate in the call of the Church to be a sign of unity in the world through knowledge of and collaboration with Jews, Muslims, and all faith traditions.

- State how the Church respects all faith traditions.**
- Articulate why other religions must be respected.**
- Show understanding that Judaism is a major world religion.
- Understand that the Catholic Church acknowledges her special relationship to the Jewish people. The Second Vatican Council declared regarding Jewish people that "this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts he makes nor of the calls he issues."**
- Describe the culture and roles in family life of the Jewish people during the time of Jesus.
- Describe the role of the rabbi in Jewish education.**
- State the significance of Jerusalem as the center of Jewish worship, Levite priesthood, sacrifice, temple life, and worship.
- Show understanding that Jews express their faith in observing the commands of the covenant, reading Sacred Scripture, synagogue worship and family life.**
- Show understanding that Islam is a religion that expresses faith in the one God.**

Standard 14 MISSIONARY VOCATION: Demonstrate an appreciation for Catholic missionary and evangelization efforts through our parish community, its culture, worship, sacramental life, and service.

- Understand that the Catholic Church acknowledges her special relationship to the Jewish people. The Second Vatican Council declared regarding Jewish people that "this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts he makes nor of the calls he issues."**
- Explain why the example of our lives as Christians is as important as what we say about the Gospel of Jesus.**
- Discuss why understanding what others believe might help you to share the Good News in a more meaningful and respectful way.
- Recognize that Jesus gave us the Catholic Church that reflects the unity of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**
- Summarize what Christ is asking of His disciples when He said: "teach them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Mt 28:20)
- Identify special missionary vocations in the lives of the saints (St. Isaac Jogues, St. Therese of Lisieux, Mother Cabrini and others).
- Recognize that the Church is missionary by nature.**



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- State that the Church has a special mission to the poor.**
- Identify those in need within communities and provide appropriate service to help them.*
- Recognize the theology of stewardship as it relates to distribution and use of resources for missionary work.**
- Cite from the media examples of how discrimination and prejudice lead to events of war and injustice.*

The most important task of the catechesis of children is to provide, through the witness of adults, an environment in which young people can grow in faith. (NDC, no. 205)