

**Ontario Catholic Elementary  
Curriculum Policy Document  
Grades 1 - 8**



**Religious  
Education**



**2012**



# The Ontario Catholic Curriculum: Religious Education for Grades 1-8

## **General Directory for Catechesis (1997)**

In 1971, the General Catechetical Directory (GDC) was published as a direct response to a recommendation of the Second Vatican Council's document Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church. So significant was this statement's outline of fundamental principles of catechetical instruction that, in light of the post-conciliar catechetical activity of the Church and the subsequent publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992), revisions were required, leading to the publication in 1997 of the General Directory for Catechesis.

The present document, then, firmly places all catechesis in the context of evangelization. Moreover, the GDC makes clear that the central reference point of such work is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as reflected in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). If the CCC conveys the content of the faith - the what - then the GDC can be understood to provide catechists with the rationale and methodological principles - the why and the how.

Religious Education in Catholic schools complements family and parish-based catechesis. It incorporates the methods and principles of catechesis best suited to the school milieu, and leading to the development of religious knowledge, understanding and the skills necessary for lifelong learning and spiritual development. Therefore, the authority and influence of the GDC can be seen throughout this policy document which hopes, in turn, to guide and inspire the efforts of Catholic educators to provide their students with authentic, meaningful and relevant courses of instruction in religious education.

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**Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document for Religious Education,  
Grades 1-8**

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 TRANSMISSION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

*Let us go forward in Hope! A new millennium is opening before the Church like a vast ocean upon which we shall venture, relying on the help of Christ. The Son of God, who became incarnate two thousand years ago out of love for humanity, is at work even today: we need discerning eyes to see this and, above all, a generous heart to become the instruments of his work.*

*Novo Millennio Ineunte (58)*

These words of Pope John Paul II describe the enduring mission of the Church in this new millennium. The transmission of the Christian faith in our present culture and society challenges the Church to a new evangelization “new in its ardour, methods and expression.”<sup>1</sup> But to do this we must look with “discerning eyes” to see, to critically judge and to respond appropriately to the situations of mission confronting us in this new millennium.

John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* (The Mission of the Redeemer 1990) described the first mission of the Church in promoting the Gospel as *ad gentes*, in the proper sense of the word i.e. a proclamation of the Gospel and witness of Christian faith to the world; second, the mission of establishing and supporting communities who are striving to live the Christian faith; and third, the emerging mission to those traditionally Christian groups and societies who now “live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel”; it is to this third mission that John Paul II has applied the concept of a “new evangelization”.

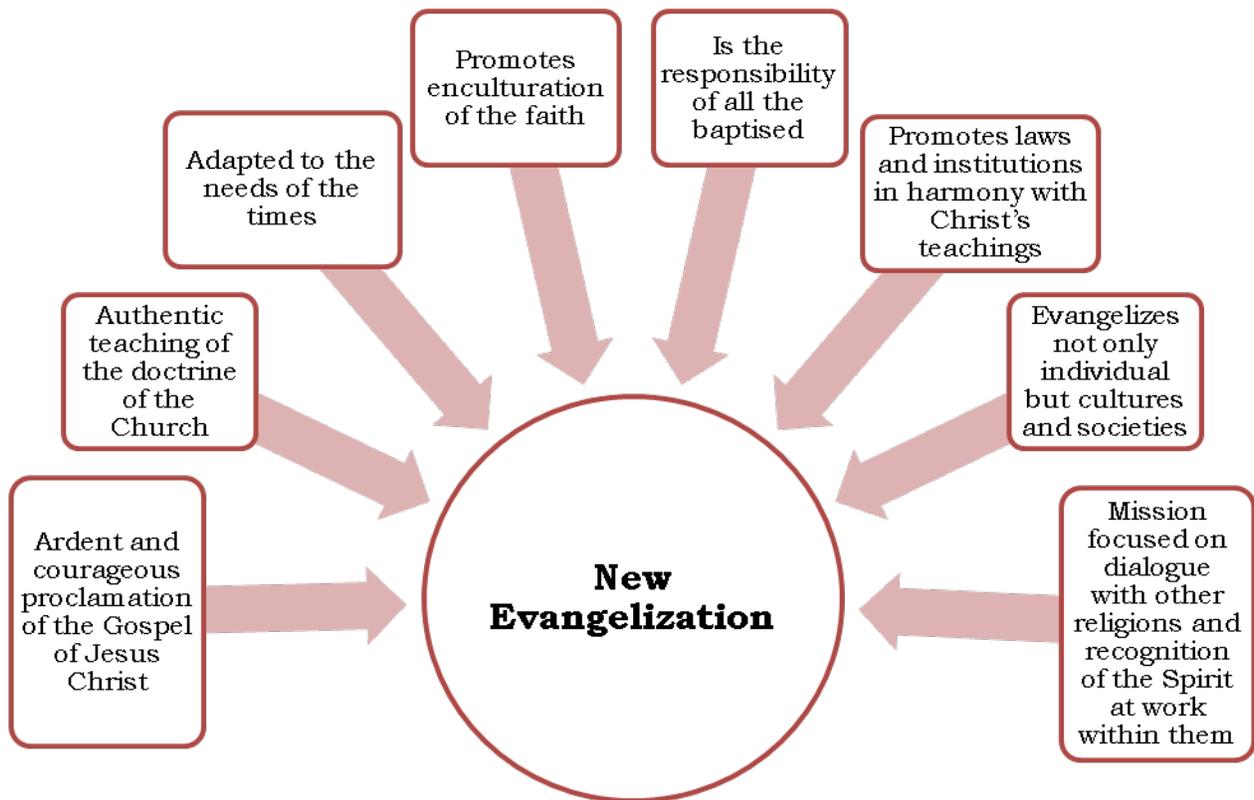
As early as 1975 the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World no. 20) stated that the “split between the Gospel and culture is without doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times”. This drama is a pressing reality which is affecting the Church’s mission in Canada. It is impacting on the Church’s ability to dialogue and promote Christian values in society and culture. The split between the Gospel and culture is weakening the practice of the faith and challenging its promotion within established ecclesial communities such as the parish, and by extension in Ontario the Catholic school. Finally in this new millennium the Church is being asked to embrace a new evangelization, especially in reaching out to those Christians whose lives are becoming more removed from Christ and the Gospel.

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<sup>1</sup> John Paul II: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* no. 34: (December 30, 1988), *AAS* 81 (1989), 455.)

## 1.2 THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

In his apostolic exhortation, *Ecclesia in America*, Pope John Paul II stated that “the vital core of the new evangelization must be a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the person of Jesus Christ; that is the preaching of his name, his teaching, his life, his promises and the Kingdom which he has gained for us by his Paschal Mystery .... Christ must be proclaimed with joy and conviction and above all by the witness of each one’s life”. He also stated that inculturation of the Gospel, and education in the faith are important components of this new evangelization. The term “evangelization” refers to every aspect of the Church’s activity. The Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) states that evangelization includes preaching, catechesis, liturgy, the sacramental life, popular piety and the witness of a Christian life. (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 17, 21, 48ff). The diagram below highlights eight elements that characterize the nature of this new evangelization as described by Pope John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio*.



*Developed from Redemptoris Missio; John Paul II*

The dynamics of the “new evangelization” can be understood as the Church’s renewed efforts to meet the challenges which today’s society and cultures are posing to the Christian faith, its proclamation, and its witness. It is synonymous with renewed spiritual efforts in the life of faith within the local Churches starting with a process to discern the changes in various cultural and social settings and their impact on Christian life.

Pope Benedict has referred to this new evangelization as the Church opening up and creating a “Court of the Gentiles” in which people might in some way latch on to God, without knowing God and before gaining access to God’s mystery, at whose service the inner life of the Church stands. This image is intended to inform the Church’s understanding of the “new evangelization” and draws upon the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah which Jesus referred to when stating that the Temple must be a house of prayer for all the nations. (cf. Is 56:7; Mk 11:17).

The Church is called to enter into dialogue with many sectors of human life which are changing (culture, social communications, economy, science and technology, and politics) with a sense of boldness in proclaiming the Gospel and the confidence to witness to the gratuitous nature and personal encounter with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However this will first require self-evaluation and purification so as to recognize any traces of fear, weariness, confusion or a retreat into oneself resulting from cultural factors. In the end, the expression “new evangelization” requires finding new approaches to evangelization so as “to be Church” in today’s ever-changing social and cultural situations. Christian life and practice must guide this reflection, in a deliberative process devising new models of “being Church”, avoiding “sectarianism” and becoming a “civic religion” while maintaining her missionary identity. In other words, the Church must not fail to be seen as a “domestic Church” and the “People of God”.

In the project of the new evangelization, there is no part of the Church which is exempt from this engagement. Every Christian ecclesial community must rededicate itself to its programme of pastoral care which seems to become more difficult and in danger of falling into routine, and thus little able to communicate its original aims and goals. A new evangelization is synonymous with mission, requiring the capacity to set out anew. It is the opposite of self-sufficiency, a withdrawal into oneself, a status quo mentality and an idea that pastoral programmes are simply to proceed as they did in the past.

Benedict XVI envisions that this new evangelization has a particular urgency for the entire Church. It is primarily addressed to those who have drifted from the Church in traditionally Christian countries. Unfortunately, this phenomenon exists in varying degrees even in some countries where the Good News was proclaimed in recent centuries, but today has not been sufficiently accepted to result in the Christian transformation of persons, families and societies.<sup>2</sup> This challenge of the new evangelization is applicable to the parish and the Catholic school in Ontario.

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<sup>2</sup> Lineamenta: The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith (Preface)

### **1.3 EVANGELIZATION, CULTURE AND THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

The task of evangelizing families, children and youth, in the Christian faith calls for a courageous renewal on the part of the parish and the Catholic school. The General Directory for Catechesis (no. 49) describes the process of evangelization as structured in stages or “essential moments”: missionary activity directed to non-believers and those who live in religious indifference; initial catechetical activity for those who choose the Gospel and for those who need to complete or modify their initiation; pastoral activity directed toward the Christian faithful of mature faith in the bosom of the Christian community. These moments, however, are not unique: they may be repeated, if necessary, as they give evangelical nourishment in proportion to the spiritual growth of each person or of the entire community.

The Directory also suggests that an essential part of that process should include the identification of the “soil of the believer.” To look with discerning eyes at the soil into which the transmission of the Christian faith, the seeds of the Good News of Jesus Christ, are sown. This would involve examining not only the nature of the students who are being taught but also the culture in which they live with their families. Both have a powerful influence on what our students experience, value and believe.

Canadian children are fortunate to be living in a country marked by social, cultural and civil realities that can potentially have a positive influence on their human maturation and religious / faith formation:

- the defence of human rights and freedoms including freedom of religion;
- the family honoured as its most important institution, protected by law;
- multicultural and multi-faith communities which broaden a child’s worldview and foster inclusive welcoming communities;
- an attitude of tolerance and appreciation for diversity;
- democratic governance formed on a healthy attitude of secularity;
- the provision of publically funded schools;
- concern for the development of the whole child; intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual for the formation of citizens who promote and protect the common good;
- international outreach and a concern for the environment.

At the same time, Canadian culture and society, in general, has been highly influenced by globalization and unprecedented technological advances. Social communication and the sharing of information are changing the way we relate to each other and to the world. It has brought the immediacy of world events and differing cultural ideologies into our homes. The exposure to such ideas and beliefs without legitimate critique and prudent explanation has the potential to negatively influence the Christian moral development of our children and youth. The over-activity and business of life is increasing. An exaggerated focus on acquiring and consuming material goods can contribute to this reality and distort our understanding of the dignity of the human person. It sometimes prevents families and individuals from finding time to promote legitimate rest, cultural and artistic expression,

and above all to address the spiritual needs and religious practices of the family. At times these societal influences have overshadowed the importance of the religious formation of children and weaken the necessary relationship of baptised children and adults with the Church i.e. parishes.

In this present millennium “education faces many new challenges which are the result of a new socio-political and cultural context”<sup>3</sup>. These challenges are found in all sectors of human life concerning culture, society, social communications, economics, science and technology, civic life, politics and religion. They are reflected in the following trends:

- Crises of values – a growing secularism, the influence of the social media, subjectivism, moral relativism and nihilism.
- Globalization – rapid structural changes in communication, new developments in science and technology, the economy, civic and political life.
- Multiculturalism – massive migration, multiethnic and religious societies.

Within the educational field these present external realities of society and culture have also coincided with new demands and expectations which have broadened its traditional scope of responsibility and at the same time resulted in the teaching of curriculum which has become more complex and specialized. It calls upon educators and teachers to embrace new content, skills and educational models to ensure that the process of student learning meets standardized outcomes.

In this new millennium, Catholic schools face the same challenges to religious education encountered by the Church. Their unique contribution to the pastoral work of the Church is based on a history of collaboration while maintaining their educational vitality through prudent innovation. They have shared in the responsibility for the social and cultural development of society and the different communities that they serve, promoting genuine human and communitarian progress, collaborating in the organic pastoral care of the family, and in the care they have assumed for the spiritual and material development of those less fortunate.

The new millennium is challenging the Catholic school to a courageous renewal “not merely one of adaptation, but of missionary thrust and the duty to evangelize.”<sup>4</sup> It is, therefore, opportune to devote careful attention to certain fundamental characteristics of the Catholic school, which are of great importance if its educational activity is to be effective in the Church and in society. These include: “the Catholic school as a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation; its ecclesial and cultural identity; its mission of education as a work of love; its service to society; the traits which should characterize the educating community.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education: *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, no. 1; Pauline Books and Media; 1998.

<sup>4</sup> *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, no. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education: *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*; no. 4.

The role of Catholic schools in collaboration with the various communities i.e. parents, Church, parishes, and teachers and educators, can make a real contribution in promoting authentic education, instruction in the faith, and in witness to the common good. Consequently, a process of discernment in this area would be beneficial to distinguish the educational and spiritual resources of the Church's commitment in addressing the future challenges in education so that the "ecology of the human person" is constructed.

#### **1.4 EVANGELIZATION WITHIN THE ECCLESIAL COMMUNITY OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

The Catholic school can have a unique role in the new evangelization. In recent years it has become a challenged and compassionate meeting place, an educational ecclesial community which receives children and young people who experience the difficulties of the present time: some student's who struggle to learn, who lack the human strengths of diligent effort; others who are incapable of self-sacrifice and perseverance, who lack authentic models to guide them, often in their own families. In an increasing number of instances they are not only indifferent to the Christian faith and non-practising in the local community of the parish, but also totally lacking in religious and moral formation. There are also a growing number of students and families who exhibit a profound apathy for such formation. This atmosphere "produces a certain degree of pedagogical tiredness, which intensifies the ever increasing difficulty of conciliating the role of the teacher with that of the educator in today's context"<sup>6</sup>.

At the heart of Christ's teaching lay the primary goal of the Catholic school, the promotion of the human person in their material and spiritual needs. The vision of the school, along with its educational activity, curriculum and pedagogical instruction must be based on a Christian concept of the human person and their integral development.

The complexity of the modern world and its growing secularity of values have weakened the ecclesial identity of the Catholic school and its relation to the parish. As a genuine instrument of pastoral ministry it participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church as a privileged environment of Christian education and a genuine experience of Church. More importantly it also involves care and attention for the weakest in society, to those children who are marginalized and suffer from a material and spiritual poverty.

The cultural identity and educational nature of the Catholic school requires that it be at the public service of society. One of its most significant elements and potential contributions in this new millennium becomes the synthesis between culture and faith. Knowledge acquired by the student in the context of faith becomes a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and history. The Catholic school by its nature has a public character while offering a specific denominational education curriculum. It fulfills a public role by ensuring cultural and educational pluralism so that freedom and the right of families to educate their children according to their wishes are ensured.

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<sup>6</sup> The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium; no. 6.

## 1.5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The educating community of the Catholic school requires that those involved strive to be exemplary in character, confirming such authenticity through selfless dedication to the life and truth of the Christian faith that they teach. As Pope Paul VI stated, “modern [persons] listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.”<sup>7</sup> This also means that the Church must provide and ensure the necessary support and formation for those who have long been involved in the work of religious education (teachers and parents, educators, catechists, priests and bishops). This formation and pastoral care must be spiritual in nature so that one is only able to evangelize when they have been evangelized and allow themselves to be evangelized. This spiritual renewal is only possible through a personal encounter and lived communion with Jesus Christ.

Attention must also be given to the relationships which exist among those who make up the educating community of the Catholic school. Teachers have a place of privilege and a great responsibility to participate in this new evangelization. Parents have a primary and natural responsibility to become engaged and support their children through the school and the parish if the goals of education and the transmission of the faith are to be effectively achieved in light of our present culture and society.

### PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

The General Directory for Catechesis (GDC) reminds us that parents are the first educators of their children in the practice of the faith. They bear the greatest responsibility for the transmission of faith to their children for theirs is the responsibility of forming the child for the reception of the Good News of the Gospel. From the moment of their birth, children begin to develop the resources that will determine their participation in a life of faith. Through a loving relationship with their parents or guardians, children develop “a sense of trust, of freedom, of self-giving, of invocation and of joyful participation” (GDC no. 180). All of these are important attributes necessary for a life-long journey in the development of their faith. Transmission of the faith in the family happens when children and parents experience together:

- a practice of regular participation in the Sacraments, especially the Sunday Mass;
- the ritual of daily prayer in the morning, at mealtime, and at bedtime;
- reflecting on the Sacred Scriptures and sharing ideas about the importance of a particular passage for their lives;
- the practice of *devotions* and seasonal rituals (e.g. praying the rosary, prayer before the advent wreaths or Christmas crèche);
- forgiving and being forgiven;
- freely offering service and love to each other;

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<sup>7</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41.

- reaching out to the greater community in acts of charity and justice to develop a sense of compassion and the common good.

Parents can encourage their children to better understand the Christian heritage - specifically the Catholic tradition, to develop their inner spiritual life and make a judicious choice of values and to make a commitment to build a more humane world. They can share their faith with their children and introduce them to the Sunday Eucharistic celebration, the sacraments and other community celebration of their faith.

Collaboration between parents and teachers can promote and deepen faith development in children. When parents are familiar with the proposed religious education program, they can better communicate with the teacher to provide useful information and ask pertinent questions about the progress and performance of their child. Their commitment to the preparation of their children for the sacraments, involvement in parish-school liturgies, attendance at parent meetings and participation in the school council is invaluable.

## **THE PARISH - CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

The whole Christian community has a role to play in the passing on of the faith to children and youth for the parish is the primary location in which the Christian community is formed and expressed.<sup>8</sup> The first catechetical task of the parish priest and leaders is the fostering of “a sense of common responsibility for catechesis in the Christian community - a task that involves all the faithful - and recognition and appreciation for catechists and their mission.”<sup>9</sup>

### ***The Parish Priest***

*Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church. The Second Vatican Council indicates the necessity for pastors “to form genuine Christian communities” and for catechumens “[to] learn to co-operate actively in building up the Church and its work of evangelization”. (GDC no. 86)*

The parish priest has a significant role to play in this partnership. The General Directory for Catechesis states that in filling his role as parish priest, he is to “integrate catechetical activity into his program of community evangelization and foster the link between catechesis, sacraments and liturgy.” (no. 225) The priest fulfills an important part of this role when he works to create a bond of cooperation and friendship with all members of the school community: principal, teachers, students, parents, and support staff by:

- supporting the principal of the school in her or his role as spiritual leader of the school;
- providing spiritual and religious support and guidance to enable staff and students to grow in their understanding and commitment to the faith;

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<sup>8</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, no. 257.

<sup>9</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, no. 225.

- supporting teachers in their responsibility to educate children and youth in the faith by sharing resources, knowledge and expertise;
- participating in the religious education class to draw links between various themes in the religious education program and the Gospel (e.g. readings for the Sunday Mass) thus contributing within the school environment to the faith development of children and youth;
- providing opportunities for staff and students to participate in liturgical celebrations including the Mass and other forms of prayer and devotion as a community of believers;
- encouraging a collegial effort on the part of parish catechists and school teachers in the preparation of children for the reception of the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation;
- creating opportunities for continued evangelization of parents and teachers that will support them in their role as religious educators and witnesses to the faith.

### ***Lay Pastoral Minister (Catechists)***

In many parishes throughout Ontario, the parish priest is challenged by limitations of time and availability of staff to fulfill all of his responsibilities in meeting the sacramental, catechetical and liturgical needs of his parish community. Yet there is a great need for parish-based catechesis for children and youth ministry for pre-teens in order to bring religious education to life. Trained lay pastoral ministers can assist the priest by serving as a link between the school and the parish by providing catechesis for children, youth and adults, and by working in cooperation with schools to prepare students for the reception of the sacraments of initiation. In schools where there is no chaplain, lay pastoral ministers could be invited to lead school retreats, participate in discussion during religion class, help create and celebrate liturgies, and represent the parish at school council meetings.

### ***Parish Leaders and Laity***

It is important that all members of the parish community become aware of, understand and appreciate the effort of the Catholic school to offer religious education programs to children and youth in the community. This same community is invited to pray for those who teach the children and youth of our community. They are encouraged to participate in parish councils, information meetings, and liturgical gatherings.

In addition, there exists in every Christian community, men and women whose talents can contribute to the faith development of children and youth. Whether through testimony, presentation or simple support, these community members, through their volunteerism, can provide many learning experiences that enrich the religious education programs in schools. To foster this partnership, it is important to ensure good communication between the school and the parish pastoral council.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Translated from: Le curriculum de l'Ontario de la maternelle à la 8e année: Enseignement religieux pour les écoles catholiques de langue française.

## SCHOOL – PRINCIPAL & TEACHERS

Catholic schools are an extension of the pastoral and evangelizing mission of the Church and a most important place for human and Christian formation. This close association between school and parish at the service of parents provides students with the support they need to grow into active members of their faith. Working in partnership, they offer a living and genuine witness of the faith while providing the educational and spiritual needs of the students. Parish and school work co-operatively to prepare students to participate in the sacramental life of the Church.

Those in leadership positions within the Catholic system are responsible for providing a community of learning and faith development in our Catholic schools. It is their particular task to establish conditions that promote student success while ensuring religious education programs that not only promote religious knowledge and skills but also have the potential to deepen a student's relationship with God and their life of Christian faith.

### *The Principal*

The principal is responsible for ensuring that the religious education program is taught each year and that there is consistency between the teachings of the religious education program and the actual day-to-day life of the school. The principal has it within his or her power to set the tone of life within a school and to ensure its distinctly Christian ethos both in the experiences our children have and the quality of the religious education they receive. Principals, with the support of school board personnel, can fulfill part of their role as spiritual leaders of the school by:

- providing opportunities for ongoing teacher training and all the resources required for planning religious education programs;
- allocating the time required for teaching the religion program;
- ensuring the integration of Catholic teaching across the curriculum;
- providing chaplaincy leadership, particularly in the implementation of some school-based pastoral activities. (Although chaplains are not usually assigned to elementary schools, board chaplains and religious education consultants/coordinators could fulfill this need);
- supporting teachers who find themselves in delicate or difficult situations;
- promoting and maintaining a good communication network with various stakeholders, especially parents, the parish priest and parish leaders (particularly those responsible for parish-based catechism programs);
- helping to coordinate parish and school responsibilities for the preparation of students for the reception of First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation;
- providing the opportunity for parish-school relationships by sharing effective practices and new religious education resources;
- inviting parents to deepen their involvement with the parish community and its social and ecclesial activities.

## ***Teachers***

The primary role for teachers with regard to religious education is the transmission of knowledge about the faith. The secondary role is to support the catechetical efforts of the parish and the home. This is a participation in the work of the Church in which they become ministers of the Word and teach on behalf of the Christian community. They are called to be transmitters of the faith as they help prepare young people to be “clothed in Christ” and to become “salt for the earth and light for the world.” Teachers teach not only the content of faith to pupils but by the witness of their lives, they help students discover what it means to live their faith. They never forget that students are also their brothers and sisters in faith; they accompany them in prayer and support them in their faith journey. While respecting each student, teachers engage in a dialogue on the meaning of life and the way to happiness revealed by Jesus Christ. In the same spirit, they present the Gospel values which they themselves witness to. They provide opportunities for students to relate their knowledge and skills to everyday life, they encourage them to take a critical look at the world around them and to make a commitment to witness with their lives to the kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice, peace and joy. Teachers transmit the faith to students when they:

- teach not only the content of faith but relate it to the students’ lives;
- speak with integrity on behalf of the faith community while being faithful to Church teaching and the message of the Gospel;
- support and mentor young people in their faith as they strive to understand the value of Christianity and seek to integrate it into their daily lives;
- assist in their Christian moral formation (of conscience);
- witness to the Gospel message in their relationship with each student, participate in the sacramental life of the Church, especially Sunday Eucharist, and the ministries of the Church (e.g. lector, choir member, St. Vincent de Paul Society).

Religious education is therefore more than teaching life skills or sharing information. It is participation in the essential mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News and to empower young people to live out their baptismal commitment in a mature way.

## ***The Student***

Students are sometimes considered to be passive agents in their personal development. All is prepared for him or her. The student has only to follow the approach proposed by the responsible adult. However, the student is the main protagonist / agent in the catechetical process. The Word resounds within our hearts and it is here that Jesus comes to meet with us and where we make a home for Him. Our intelligence is enlightened by the Spirit so that the Word can speak to our heart. The student is not a blank slate onto which they write their own path. In Baptism, they were clothed in Christ and opened through God’s grace to receive the gift of the Spirit. Each person is blessed to receive these gifts in their own thirst for happiness, their own questions, and their own life experience.

Gradually, children mature; they become increasingly responsible for their own learning, for their own journey of faith. “Students who are willing to make the effort required, and who are able to monitor their thinking and learning strategies and to apply themselves, will soon discover that there is a direct relationship between this effort and their achievement, and will therefore be more motivated to work. Students who develop mental attitudes and ways of behaving that contribute to success in life will benefit as learners.”<sup>11</sup> There are other students who, because of extenuating circumstances, find it more difficult to take responsibility for their learning. They must be able to count on the attention, patience and encouragement of their parents and their teachers. However, teaching each student to feel responsible for their learning and to be the architect of its success is an important school task. In particular, religious education helps students develop attitudes toward freedom and responsibility, a desire for the truth and goodness, an openness to dialogue which involves faith and reason in the search for meaning, purpose and understanding in life.

The Ontario Ministry of Education, when describing the nature of self-directed learners, points out in its policy documents that successful mastery of a particular discipline “requires a sincere commitment to work and the development of skills of cooperation. Furthermore, students should actively pursue opportunities outside the classroom to extend and enrich their understanding of [any discipline].”<sup>12</sup> Teachers rely heavily on the efforts of parents to form positive character in their children and to provide opportunities for enrichment of the religious experiences provided in the school. Here, too, the parish can play a significant role by encouraging active participation of children and youth in the life of the parish.

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<sup>11</sup> Science and Technology: the Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, page 7.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

## 2. Instructional Approach and Strategies

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### 2.1 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION, CATECHESIS

Religious education, religious instruction, education to faith, catechesis, Christian education in the faith: all of these terms have been and continue to be used in various settings and documents to speak of school courses related to Catholic doctrine. The English translators of the General Directory for Catechesis favour the expression “religious instruction” when referring to such courses. The tradition of the Catholic educational community in Ontario has been to use the expression “religious education”. In the following paragraphs, in order to avoid ambiguity, we will use “religious education” in the passages where the Directory speaks of “religious instruction”.<sup>13</sup>

The Directory specifically distinguishes between catechesis and *religious education*, stating in no. 73 that the “relationship between religious education in schools and catechesis is one of distinction and complementarity: ‘there is an absolute necessity to distinguish clearly between *religious education* and catechesis.’”

What specifies religious education is its school-centered context, where students are being introduced to a critical and systematic assimilation of culture. Classes in religious education are related to this overarching educational imperative and are related to other courses in helping students achieve this assimilation of culture from a specifically Catholic viewpoint, “keeping in touch with the other elements of the student’s knowledge and education; thus the Gospel will impregnate the mentality of the students in the field of their learning, and the harmonization of their culture will be achieved in the light of faith” (222).

This is why “*religious education* in schools (must) appear as a scholastic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.” The Directory further specifies that *religious education* “must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which the other disciplines present their knowledge. It should not be accessory alongside of these disciplines, but rather it should engage in a necessary interdisciplinary dialogue. Through inter-disciplinary dialogue, *religious education* in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the education activity of the school.”

Since the 1950’s, various schools of thought have inflected religious education in different directions, focusing on various aspects of the Catholic tradition, (i.e. its doctrinal formulations, its Biblical foundations, its impact in the spiritual life of individuals, its socio-historical impact in the world). Pedagogical methods have also varied, alternating between memorization and more personal approaches, between highly structured processes

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<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting that the tradition in French-speaking Ontario has been to use the expression «enseignement religieux» (literally, «religious teaching») whereas the Directory, in its French version, uses the expression “enseignement de la religion” (literally, “the teaching of religion”).

to more open methods. The Directory seems to favour a balanced, multivalent approach to religious education, recalling its core purpose when it states that students: “have the right to learn with truth and certainty the religion to which they belong. This right to know Christ, and the salvific message proclaimed by Him, cannot be neglected. The confessional character of *religious education* in schools, in its various focuses, given by the Church in different countries is an indispensable guarantee offered to families and students who choose such education” (74).

Since students come from different backgrounds and have diverse personal histories, they will not all approach a course in religious education from the same faith stance. Some of them will be truly engaged as disciples of Christ, others will be seekers trying to better understand what the Gospel is about, while others still will be indifferent to the claims of the Gospel, yet might be open to understanding the role of Christianity in today’s culture. The Directory acknowledges the differences between these three groups of students and suggests that a well-structured course in religious education will be able to respond to the needs specific to each of them:

“In the case of students who are believers, *religious education* assists them to understand better the Christian message, by relating it to the great existential concerns common to all religions and to every human being, to the various visions of life particularly evident in culture and to those major moral questions which confront humanity today.

“The students who are searching, or have religious doubts, can also find in *religious education* the possibility of discovering what exactly faith in Jesus Christ is, what response the Church makes to their questions, and gives them the opportunity to examine their own choice more deeply.

“In the case of students who are non-believers, *religious education* assumes the character of a missionary proclamation of the Gospel and is ordered to a decision of faith, which catechesis, in its turn, will nurture and mature.” (GDC no. 75)

This last paragraph specifically identifies religious education as a first step in the new evangelization which needs to be complemented by a further activity: catechesis. This invites us to clearly understand what was stated at the beginning of this section: that religious education and catechesis, though related, are distinct activities. Catechesis, as the Directory itself specifies, is directed to believers; it helps them to understand their faith and to articulate it; its context is the believing community as it celebrates the sacred mysteries throughout the liturgical year; indeed, in many ways, the liturgy is its source and its end. The usual “home” of catechesis is the parish, though Catholic schools can certainly offer catechetical activities, especially through the service of school chaplaincies and parish-school activities.

No doubt, religious education will have a catechetical dimension for those believing students who belong to the first group named above. This is why the present policy document names the “hopes” we have for the faith-lives of our students from grade to grade. Though religious education is not specifically catechetical in nature, it plays an

important role in the new evangelization as it strives to bring seeking and non-believing students into contact with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Catholic school is the vital and privileged place where students critically engage in a dialogue between faith and culture not only during religious education lessons but in all curriculum and events of the day. It is a place where they can be formed for roles of Christian service, vocations and responsible participation in the political and social spheres of community life. Students grow to understand that their faith brings meaning and direction to all aspects of human living. Through cross-curricular teaching, religious education provides a lens through which students can understand the world and their place within it. It will influence the way students understand history, the role of religion in culture, the person's responsibility to care for nature, the values and attitudes that promote safe, inclusive communities, and the need for ethics in the workplace among other things of importance to a Christian way of life.

## **2.2 METHODOLOGY APPROPRIATE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

An important focus of religious education is knowledge and understanding of the faith, a gift of conversion and the acquired skills of Christian witness; therefore, because of its relationship to the whole process of evangelization, religious education in Catholic schools should incorporate those methods of the tradition which have proven to promote good religious formation. A methodology that supports religious education as systematic instruction and which supports the catechetical programs of the parish should include the following elements:

- Systematic instruction in the doctrine of the faith, its creed, its moral precepts and social teachings;
- The presentation of Sacred Scripture and Tradition as God's ongoing self-revelation;
- Respect and attention given to human experience;
- Critical analysis of culture and society in light of Church teaching;
- The application of a Catholic worldview to various religious, ethical, social, and political issues;
- A variety of learning experiences and strategies to address the needs of all students;
- Opportunities for:
  - self-reflection, and critique of oneself and society in light of Christ's message and Tradition;
  - prayer and celebration that respect religious freedom;
  - sharing through story, discussion and community service the experience of God and faith;
- Development of:
  - appreciation for the Catholic tradition to promote willing participation in the life of the Church;
  - moral responsibility, Gospel values and Christian virtues which form students to be good citizens for society;

- specific skills related to religious education as a distinct discipline (critical thinking and analysis, interpretation, reflection, application of learning to life).

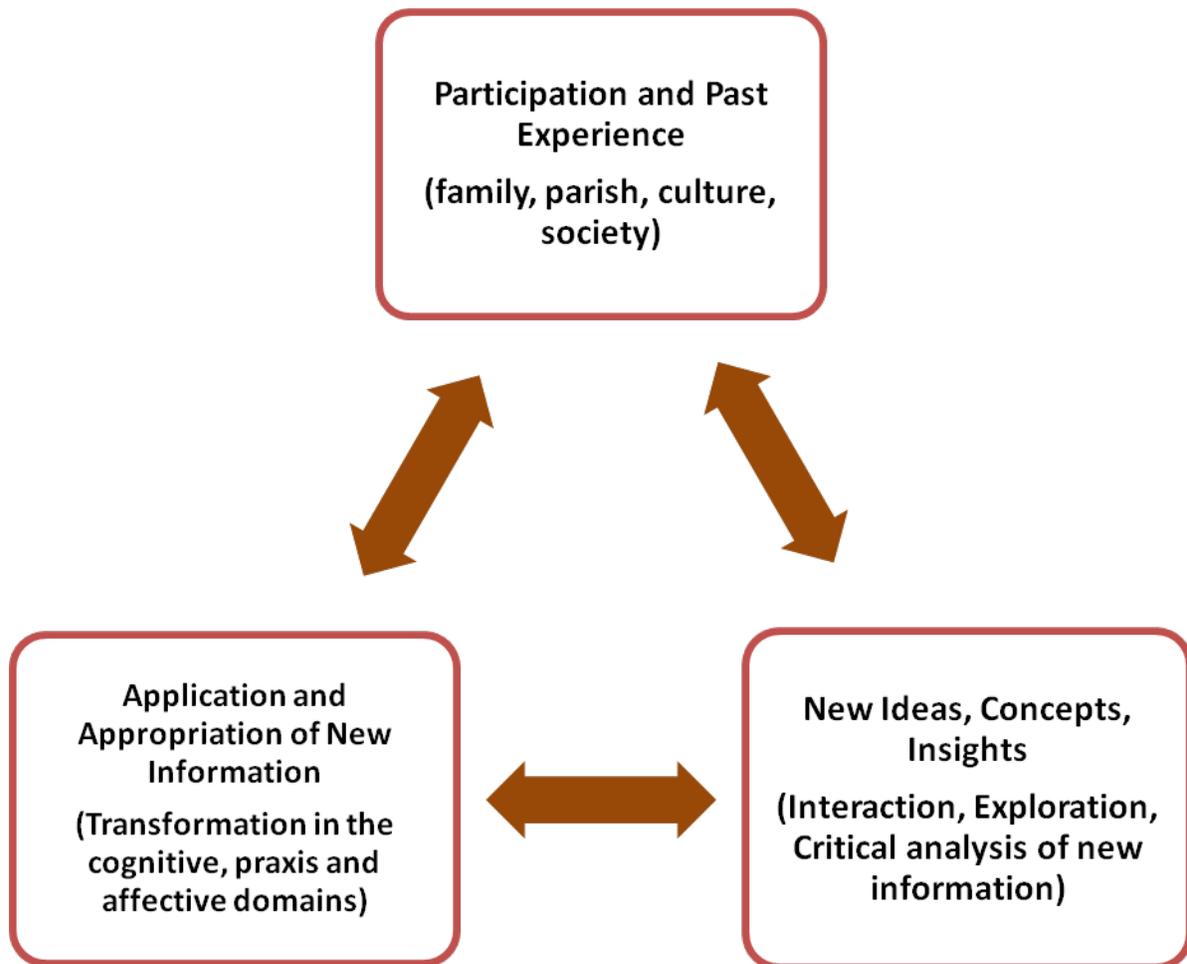
The following approach to offering religious education in Catholic schools endeavours to incorporate these elements through the use of a hermeneutical approach to teaching/learning. It seeks to integrate understanding, interpretation and a living of the Christian life through three components:

- Participation and Experience
- Exploration and Interpretation
- Application and Appropriation

The interconnectedness between these three components fosters reflection, reformulation of knowledge, and a deepening of understanding, thus forming within students a new outlook and approach to living their lives.

It is important to point out that these three components are not always linear steps but are movements within a dynamic process. As the following diagram indicates, at any point in the process, students may be asked to reflect on their life experience, their attitudes, their personal beliefs and on cultural myths to identify how the learning experience might alter their understanding of truth, or challenge their values and/or actions. Through this methodology of reflection, students grow in their appreciation and understanding of the Catholic faith, the Church that seeks to form them in that experience and the Christian values which they are called to receive and witness to in their lives.

## Methodology Appropriate to Religious Education



### *Component 1: Participation and Experience*

Students come to us from various cultural backgrounds, family structures, value systems, intellectual readiness and limitations. The General Directory for Catechesis states that this prior experience or participation in life is the starting point for new learning. (no. 117) The naming and exploration of this prior experience, especially when examined in the light of the Gospels and Church teaching can help students to identify what it means to live the Christian faith and to appreciate what faith offers to our human life. This process can occur explicitly and intentionally or can be implicit and not consciously intended; however, it can provide a framework to address the process of transformation and growth in religious faith. “Experience is a necessary medium for exploring and assimilating the truths which constitutes the objective content of Revelation.” (GDC no. 152) Teaching students to critique their present understanding of life in light of new knowledge of faith promotes a

reconstruction of their present mind-set and can lead to changes in attitude and the assimilation of new values for living.

Story, video, music critique, brainstorming, sharing personal stories, interviews, and review of previous learning are just some of the strategies used to name and explore the lived experience of students.

### ***Component 2: Exploration and Interpretation***

A primary function of religious education is the passing on of knowledge and an understanding of the faith. The exploration and interpretation of the content of a program, regardless of the discipline, demands the greatest portion of the time allotted to any unit of study and will acquire the largest share of assessment and evaluation.

Having named and explored their life experience, students are provided with new information and challenged to identify actions, beliefs and values that are consistent with the Truth found in Sacred Scripture and Tradition in order to deepen their understanding and commitment to faith in Christ. This new information can be acquired through a variety of resources: religious education texts, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the sciences, cultural studies and philosophy, the media (e.g. newspapers, videos, and internet).<sup>14</sup>

This second component offers a new way of understanding to the student in light of their participation and experience of life in terms of faith. We cannot grow in self-understanding unless we are willing to consider the Truth, an objective perspective, a fuller explanation, and a more comprehensive view of the dignity of the human person and society.

Learning occurs through the skilful use of many learning strategies such as role play, reading to comprehend, direct instruction, problem solving, group discussion, media analysis, case studies, research project, to name but a few. The skilled teacher relies on a variety of learning strategies and resources to present new information so as to capture the interest of all students.

*The Church, in transmitting the faith, discerns contemporary methods in the light of the pedagogy of God and uses with liberty “everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we live and honour and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise” (Philippians 4:8). In short, she uses those methods which are not contrary to the Gospel and places them at its service. The “variety of methods is a sign of life and richness” as well as a demonstration of respect for those to whom catechesis [and religious education] is addressed. Such a variety is required by “age and the intellectual development of Christians, their degree of ecclesial and spiritual maturity and many other personal circumstances.” (GDC no. 148)*

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<sup>14</sup> Bear in mind that the main content of a religion course must always be Christological and Trinitarian in nature (GDC no. 117).

Among these techniques, special mention needs to be made of memorization. Memorization was once at the heart of the pedagogical method of religious education; over the decades, it was displaced to the margins. Yet memorization is used in most subjects and often to good ends when properly understood and applied. Children benefit greatly by learning to recite traditional prayers and faith statements such as those found in the Creed. The Catechism of the Catholic Church has identified short summaries of important teachings that can be used for memory work.

*In particular, as objects of memorization, due consideration must be given to the principal formulae of the faith. These assure a more precise exposition of the faith and guarantee a valuable common doctrinal, cultural and linguistic patrimony... Such formulae, however, should be proposed as syntheses after a process of explanation... To be numbered amongst them are some of the major formulae and texts of the Bible, of dogma, of the liturgy, as well as the commonly known prayers of the Christian tradition. (GDC no. 154)*

Common prayers of the Church, liturgical responses of the Mass, and the doctrinal statements of the Creed are all appropriate prayers for children and youth to memorize at the elementary level. In the strand entitled *Praying*, the grade in which each prayer and response to be memorized has been indicated as well as suggestions for review. Committing these prayers to memory and reinforcing memorization means incorporating them into daily prayer and seasonal celebrations in the classroom.

### ***Component 3: Appropriation and Application***

The final component in the methodology of religious education is appropriation. The process of faith development is not complete until the student has been able to make the new learning their own. The appropriation of new learning in religious education depends on the opportunities for practice and application of this new learning to real-life situations. Through journals, group discussions, projects, role play, the arts, and portfolios which ask them to apply learning to contemporary events or past history, students can imagine new possibilities for their own lives, new ways of being, and new choices that are based on Gospel principles and Church teaching. It is hoped that through the grace of the Holy Spirit and the support of parents and parish catechesis, the faith of students will deepen and mature.

As teachers, we may never know how effective we have been at fulfilling the goals of this third stage. To fully discern and understand what is at the heart of another is beyond human ability. Here, a teacher must rely on the movement of the Holy Spirit and trust in the process of the learning cycle to transform the students over time and in culture. The General Directory for Catechesis states:

*[God] assumes the character of the person ... according to the conditions in which they are found. He liberates the person from the bonds of evil and attracts [them] to himself by bonds of love. He causes the person to grow progressively and patiently towards the maturity of a free son [or*

*daughter] faithful and obedient to his word. To this end, as a creative and insightful teacher, God transforms events in the life of his people into lessons of wisdom, adapting himself to the diverse ages and life situations. Thus, he entrusts words of instruction and catechesis which are transmitted from generation to generation.*

General Directory for Catechesis (no. 139)

Together, the activities that comprise the learning cycle help students acquire a better understanding of what it means to be Catholic, not only in what they know about their faith but in how they are called to live their faith in the pluralistic world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is important, therefore, that students come to know that God has called them into this relationship and it is God who will affect the transformation. Their role is to co-operate out of a humble heart and loving will to be one with God, allowing God to bring them to the fullness of life. To that end, the cultivation of an authentic prayer life and providing experiences of service to others is an essential component of catechesis and should be seen as part of religious education that supports the catechetical activity of the parish.

## 2.3 TEACHING STRATEGIES

The acquisition of information in religious education requires the same attention as other subject areas to the use of a variety of teaching strategies. However, from among these commonly known teaching strategies, the following are of most importance in religious education:

**Reflection** is an action that takes place when a person encounters a new experience, particularly when it presents information that is in conflict with their present world view. Used in religious education, it can help students deepen their understanding of a new concept, record their reactions for later consideration, summarize content in their own words, compare new information with other viewpoints such as those of the media or peers, and to come to new understandings of humanity and our relationship with God. In religious education, students should have an opportunity to use a variety of forms of reflection: journaling, biblical reflection, silent meditation, guided meditation, contemplative prayer, peer discussion, and meta-cognitive reflection through self-assessment.

### **The Arts:**

Poetry, art and music reveal the beauty of faith and the passion with which Christians embrace their beliefs. Through the arts, the Catholic Church expresses the mysteries of its faith. Rublev's icon of the Trinity expresses a mystical understanding of the three-in-one nature of God and our invitation to join in the life of the divine Trinity. Rembrandt's *Return of the Prodigal Son* expresses our human need for forgiveness and the Father's unconditional love for human persons. The music of great liturgies of the Church, in particular the Mass, expresses our belief in the presence of God in the Eucharist, our roots in Judaism, our trust in God, our responsibility to participate in the life and mission of the

Church and more. Using the arts as a teaching tool is an indispensable strategy that should be mastered by religion teachers because the arts breaks open for students the mysteries of faith at a depth mere words fail to convey.

### **Making Connections with the Life of the Church:**

Religious education without a definite link to the life of the Church diminishes faith to a personal encounter with God. School masses, whenever possible, should be held in the local church. Students should visit the church for prayer, for retreats and for education about the sacred objects used in the celebration of sacraments, particularly the Mass. Visiting sacred places such as holy shrines and the churches of other rites and faiths builds a sense of wonder and awe and can contribute to a sense of belonging that encourages participation in the life of the Church.

### **Prayer and Liturgical Celebration:**

The Catholic Church has a rich history of prayer. Students should be introduced to and invited to participate in the many forms of prayer that have developed over the history of the Church, including those that have developed out of our encounter with other religious traditions, such as guided meditation and contemplative prayer. It should be noted that prayer needs to be invitational so as to respect religious freedom and the dignity of students who come from non-Catholic traditions; however, it is still a vital part of Christian formation and the school's participation in the Church's mission to evangelize the children we teach.

### **Exploration of Issues, Research and Inquiry:**

It is not enough that students know and understand the teachings of Jesus and the Church; they must be given opportunities to critique the culture and society in which they live and their own actions. They should be given opportunities to compare the values and ideals of secular society and culture to those of the Christian tradition. Research projects, compare and contrast activities, case studies, class discussions and debates are strategies that can be used to explore issues and dilemmas, the options available in given situations and the consequences of human action. Applying church teaching gives students another viewpoint to help them identify options and make choices that contribute to a positive resolution.

Through research, students can explore the lives of historical and contemporary persons, including the saints, who are examples of a life dedicated to building the kingdom of God. These people of faith serve as models for their own lives.

### **The Use of Primary Sources:**

When age-appropriate and at first, through selected passage, students should be given the opportunity to read and interpret primary sources such as the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Vatican documents, and letters from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario. The use of primary

sources helps to develop religious literacy while exposing students to the beauty and truth of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

# 3. The Program in Religious Education

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## 3.1 OUR HOPES FOR STUDENTS

Religious education seeks to develop not only knowledge and disciplinary skills but also to foster in students the attitudes and values that are part of faith and constitute the Catholic stance within the world. Because they depend on the interaction between God’s Spirit and the freedom of the individual student, attitudes and values cannot be listed as expectations, nor can they be evaluated or used for assessment purposes. Yet, they represent some of the ultimate hopes of religious educators. They are the seeds we seek to sow and nourish, the holy longings that live in the sacred secrecy of each individual’s heart. The *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* document points to the dual mandate of Catholic Schools; “the mandate given by the province’s Ministry of Education... to address specific curriculum expectations [and] the mandate of the Roman Catholic Church, anchored in the grace of our common baptism in Christ, ...to share in the ministry and mission of Christ,... to witness to the Gospel and to incorporate these elements of faith in the education of the students.” The list of *Our Hopes for Students* that precedes the overall and specific expectations for each division (primary, junior, intermediate) in this document reminds teachers of the essential importance of religious education to the broader process of evangelization. They are drawn from and echo the expectations expressed in the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*, primarily under the category of *Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community*.

## 3.2 CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

*Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1–8: Religious Education, 2012* identifies the expectations for each grade and describes the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate for assessment and evaluation of student achievement. Two sets of expectations are listed for each grade in each strand – overall expectations and specific expectations. The overall expectations describe, in general terms, the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade. The specific expectations break the overall expectations down into subsections that are contained within the overall expectations. They describe the required knowledge and skills of the overall expectation in greater detail. Taken together, the overall and specific expectations represent the mandated curriculum – the content standards.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p.16.

### ***Overall and Specific Expectations***

Expectations in Religious education are organized into six strands and are coded by the initial letters: **BL** (Believing), **CL** (Celebrating), **ML** (Living a Moral Life), **PR** (Praying), **LC** (Living in Communion), **LS** (Living in Solidarity). Each overall expectation within a strand is coded numerically and the related specific expectations are numbered as subsets of the overall.

The specific expectations which describe a particular overall expectation in more depth are listed under the abbreviated overall expectation and numbered accordingly. Each specific expectation number (e.g. BL1.1) identifies the strand to which it belongs (Believing), the related overall expectation and its place within the list of related specific expectations. For example BL1.1, BL1.2, BL1.3 and so on (e.g., BL1.2 is a specific expectation from the strand *Believing*, is related to the first *Overall* expectation of the Strand, and is the second *Specific* expectation in the list of related specific expectations).

### **3.3 STRANDS IN THE CURRICULUM**

In developing the framework for the organization of expectations under specific strands, two church documents were taken into consideration: the General Directory for Catechesis (GDC) which is a guide for catechists and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) which contains the official teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church organizes Catholic doctrine under four distinct yet complementary categories: *The Profession of the Christian Faith* (Catholic beliefs and their expression in the Creeds), *The Celebration of the Christian Mystery* (the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church), *Life in Christ* (the moral and communal life of persons and society), and *Christian Prayer* (the forms and expressions of prayer with a special focus on the Lord's prayer).

In structuring a framework for organizing the expectations into strands, the six strands of catechesis outlined in the GDC were taken into consideration. They identify the goals of catechesis and serve to identify areas of knowledge that should be addressed in religious education. Thus, they serve as a natural framework for structuring the strands.

The six tasks include:

1. Promoting knowledge of the faith.
2. Promoting knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the sacraments.
3. Promoting moral formation in Jesus Christ.
4. Teaching the Christian how to pray with Christ.
5. Preparing the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church.
6. Promoting a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.

Using the six tasks of catechesis as building blocks provides a way to position the content of the Catechism of the Catholic Church into strands that honoured the organization of both documents. This process also ensured that the natural interest students show toward social justice and environmental issues was addressed. It also served to keep the number of expectations fairly consistent across all strands while ensuring all elements of the faith were addressed. Thus, the strands chosen for Religious Education in Ontario schools are: Believing, Celebrating, Living a Moral Life, Living in Communion, Living in Solidarity, and Praying.

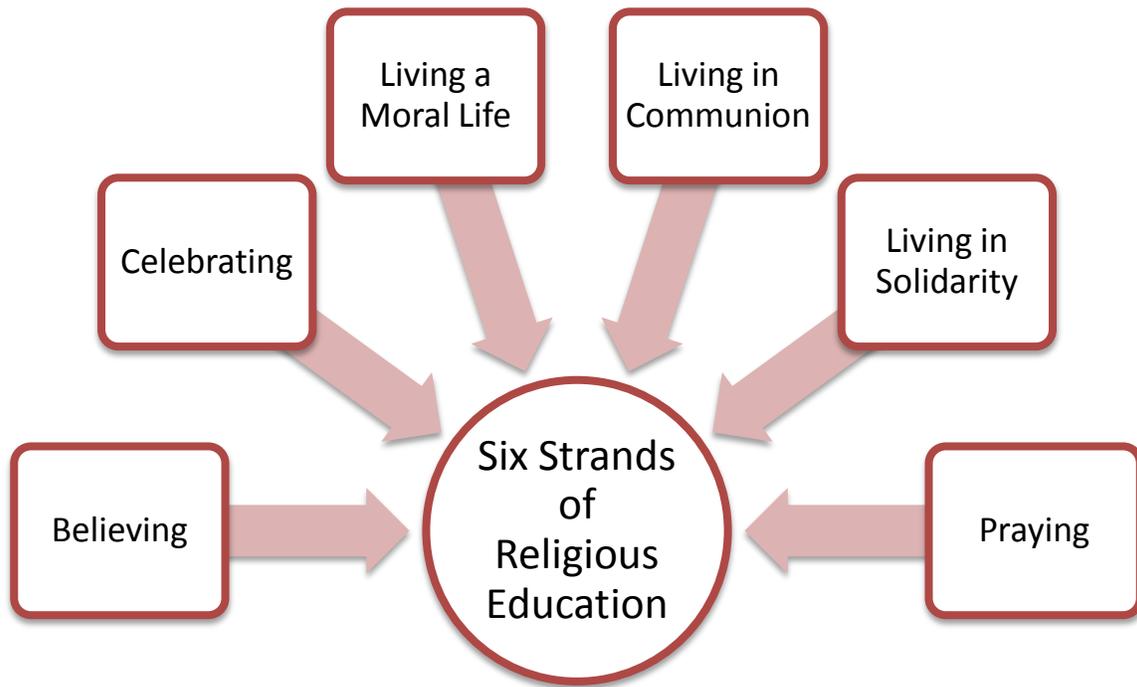
It should be noted that the six strands are not necessarily representative of six units of study, but represent knowledge about specific elements of the faith and its practice that are to be integrated across the strands to create units of study. Prayer and sacramental life are highly related, as are Living a Moral Life, Living in Solidarity and Living in Community. Believing forms the building blocks for examining the church's moral and social teachings.

### Curriculum Concepts Linked to Catechism of the Catholic Church

| Strand                      | Concepts   | Catechism Reference (CCC)  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Believing</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. God's self-revelation in Scripture and Tradition</li> <li>B. The Creed as summary and profession of Catholic beliefs</li> <li>C. In God's plan of salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Part 1, Section 2</li> <li>B. Part 1, Section 2</li> <li>C. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Celebrating</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The seven sacraments of the Church</li> <li>B. The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life</li> <li>C. The Celebrations of the Church's liturgical year</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Part 2, Section 1 and 2, Chapters 1 through 4</li> <li>B. Part 2, Section 2, Chapter 1</li> <li>C. Part 2, Section 1, Chapter 2</li> </ul>                         |
| <b>Living a Moral Life</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Moral living defined in Scripture (Law)</li> <li>B. Conscience formation and human freedom</li> <li>C. Virtue, Grace, law, sin and the call to holiness</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Part 3, Section 1, Chapter 1</li> <li>B. Part 3, Section 1, Chapter 1</li> <li>C. Part 3, Section 1, Chapters 1, 3</li> </ul>                                      |
| <b>Living in Communion</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The marks, mission and nature of the Church</li> <li>B. Life as members of the Body of Christ</li> <li>C. The Communion of Saints</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3</li> <li>B. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3</li> <li>C. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Living in Solidarity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Living as Christians in the world; vocation</li> <li>B. Catholic principles of social justice</li> <li>C. Encountering people of other religions</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3;</li> <li>B. Part 3, Section 1, Chapter 2; Section 2, Chapter 2</li> <li>C. Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Articles 3 and 4</li> </ul> |

|                |   |  |
|----------------|---|--|
| <b>Praying</b> | A. God’s universal call to prayer and our human response<br>B. <i>The Way of Prayer</i> : Forms and expressions of prayer | A. Part 4, Section 1, Chapters 1-3<br>B. Part 2, Section 1 |
|----------------|---|--|

Within each strand, fundamental concepts are identified and, through a spiralling process, are revisited each year through review, application to new information and/or additional information to increase knowledge, deepen understanding and enhance recall. For example, in each grade students will explore, at an age appropriate level, concepts such as: God’s self-revelation through Sacred Scripture and Tradition, the sacraments, and moral decision-making.



***Believing***

The concepts studied in each strand have been selected from the four sections of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Those explored in *Believing* are taken from Part One of the Catechism, *The Profession of Faith*. The focus is primarily on: God’s self-revelation (in Creation, in the person of Jesus Christ, in Sacred Scripture and in the apostolic tradition of the Church), the Creed as a summary of Catholic belief and the profession of faith, and the Church as founded by Christ to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

Sacred Scripture has a privileged place in religious education courses. As a primary source of God’s revelation, the Bible records the covenantal relationship between God, the Jewish people and the Christian Church.

As a document of faith developed within the believing community, the Bible is read and interpreted within the Church by the Magisterium in continuity with centuries of tradition

and in communion with the living reality of the contemporary people of God. In reading, listening and praying with the Bible, students learn of the loving presence of God in all creation. The Scriptures are the inspired word of God and a living witness to the faith experience of other human beings.

Since the Bible is not only a source of revelation but a literary work, many of the activities students will experience within a religious education program will facilitate religious literacy and the learning of literary skills such as the use of critical thinking and interpretation, and the recognition of various themes within the various books of the Bible.

For Catholics, “the Gospels are the heart of the Scriptures because they are our principle source for the life and teaching of the Incarnated Word, our Saviour.” [Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 125] These testimonies of faith are a privileged resource for meeting the person of Jesus and learning about the good news of salvation. “Moreover, since Revelation is a source of light for the human person, catechesis [and religious education] not only recall the marvels worked by God in the past, but also in the light of the same Revelation, it interprets the signs of the times and the present life of [humankind], since it is in these that the plan of God for the salvation of the world is realized.”<sup>16</sup>

Essential to the revelation of God is the apostolic tradition of the Church, its profession of faith in the Creed, in doctrinal statements and in the authoritative teachings of the Magisterium. Students should achieve a genuine understanding of these teachings so that their learning is not simply a memorization of formulas but an intelligent articulation of their faith in a language that is appropriate to both the Catholic tradition and to their age and ability.

It should be noted that “the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.” This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome. [CCC no. 85] Church teaching brings the message of the Gospels and contemporary culture into dialogue and helps Christians understand Christ’s message for us today.

### ***Celebrating***

The Catholic faith is rich in symbols, rituals and prayers that it uses to celebrate God’s intimate relationship with humanity. The seven sacraments of the Church, and in particular the Mass, reveal, remember and celebrate the history of God’s presence among the people of the earth. This strand focuses on ways that the Church expresses its faith in worship through liturgy, primarily through the celebration of the sacraments with attention given to the primacy of the Eucharist. In many ways, it refers primarily to the actions that demonstrate thankful awareness of God’s presence in the world. In support of catechesis, it promotes a knowledge of the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments – the correct meaning and function of symbols (e.g. water, oil, light), symbolic actions, and liturgical

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<sup>16</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, no. 39.

prayers, including the Creed as proclaimed in the Mass. Concepts for this strand include: the seven sacraments and the tradition of the Church; the Mass as source and summit of faith; the liturgical seasons of the Church.

The unfolding of the liturgical year provides many learning opportunities concerning the use of religious symbols and ritual within the school setting. Likewise, the liturgical year affords the opportunity for participation and study of the Church's sacramental life. Through the celebration of Eucharist and the experiences of religious education, students have opportunities to embrace more fully the commitment of their Baptism into the faith. Instruction should present the sacraments as visible signs of the presence and action of God, Jesus as the pre-eminent sacrament whose life made visible the action of God in an unparalleled manner, and Church as the sacrament of Christ making his teachings and his saving grace visible across all cultures and through successive generations. The seven sacraments then signify and accomplish God's loving initiative to lead people to wholeness by interceding at significant moments of their lives from birth through maturity to death.

### ***Living a Moral Life***

Moral living for Christians is “God’s universal call to holiness.”<sup>17</sup> Living a holy life means a lifelong effort to follow the way of Christ who reveals to us God and his love for all of creation. Jesus’ call to “be perfect” (Mt. 5:48) does not assume that human beings have the capacity to live perfect lives. It recognizes human frailty and the capacity for sin and at the same time calls for our transformation so that we might stand before God as one who has sought to know the will of God and done our best to be obedient to that will; a hope that we might embrace what it means to be fully human and become an example of God’s perfect love for the world.

*...May he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus...[holiness] of purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness...*  
(Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 6:6-7a)

To be holy is to love God and to live in God. This understanding of moral living is linked to the gift of virtue the Holy Spirit imparts on us through the sacraments, the need to actively form ourselves for virtuous life, and the Holy Spirit’s active participation in the process of moral decision-making. It also calls us to consider the reality of our world and how it impacts on our understanding of God’s will.

The modern world is characterized by a multiplicity of values, philosophies, and ideologies. In the democratic, pluralistic society that is Canada, these perspectives may creatively interact and reinforce one another, or they may compete with and contradict one another. What is potentially lost amidst this plurality is the singular revelation of God through Jesus Christ and his Church. God’s call to holiness is overspoken by the voices of cultural myths. Moreover, for the adolescent learner, this diversity of values may relativize

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<sup>17</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter V.

the understanding of truth and Christian morality and lead to ethical ambiguity or to secularism.

In the face of this situation, it is imperative that students be given the means with which to make sound moral choices and judgements in both personal and social spheres of life. *Living a Moral Life* aims at the formation of children and youth in the virtues of the faith, (above all, the theological virtues, and in particular the virtue of charity). It is rooted in the Gospel values of respect for life, love, solidarity, Truth and justice. Through morals education, students encounter God's call to holiness and are given the opportunities to assimilate Christian values and develop the theological and cardinal virtues while placing them in dialogue with culture. In conjunction with the other strands, *Living a Moral Life* prepares students to participate in the betterment of society and its pursuit of the Common Good. Christ, therefore, is presented as the model upon whom Christians shape their lives.

This strand also provides the building blocks for an understanding of conscience, conscience formation and human freedom that will be developed further in secondary religious education programs. The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes the importance of conscience formation in this way:

*“Conscience must be informed and moral judgement enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings. The education of the conscience is a lifelong task [that] guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.”*

[CCC nos. 1783-1784]

Critical thinking and analytical skills assist in the efforts to integrate a Catholic worldview into decisions concerning such moral issues as right relations, forgiveness, respect for life, poverty, violence, racism, stewardship, and care of nature/the environment.

In his ministry, Jesus called all people to a conversion of the heart. Moral formation requires such a conversion so that we can walk in the footsteps of Christ. This strand asks students to journey inward to examine their present attitudes and actions in an effort to transform them into those reflective of Christ. The Sermon on the Mount is an indispensable example of conversion. Jesus, without rejecting the importance of the Ten Commandments given to Moses, transformed them into the Beatitudes, a vision of God's Kingdom. Religious education can help to promote conversion if it presents not only the demand of the Gospel – the commandments – but also the personal and social consequences of living according to those demands. Children, like adults, long for happiness. Religious education that promotes moral formation teaches children that happiness is made possible through moral living, and moral living is the path taken in response to God's call to holiness.

## ***Living in Communion***

*“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.” (1 Cor. 10: 14-17)*

These words from Paul’s Letters to the Corinthians express the full Christian meaning of communion. *Living in communion* for Catholic Christians is a concept rooted in our belief in the Trinity and in the one Body of Christ. Through the Eucharistic feast of the Mass, we are brought into the loving communion of the one Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, it does not stop there. By the very fact of this communion, we become “one body” in Christ; a communion of persons who are called into solidarity; which is marked by love, respect and care for all members of the “Body of Christ.” Furthermore it does not end there either; we respond to this communion of love by reaching out beyond those who are members of the Body to bring the good news of Christ to the world. This is the mission of the Church – to bring the Good News to the whole world; to invite others to enter into communion with our Triune God and all the faithful who follow Christ.

The strand, *Living in Communion*, focuses on our belonging to the Church as the Body of Christ: our involvement within community, our call to vocation and our sharing in the mission of the Church. It is inevitably connected to the strand *Living in Solidarity*, which extends this concept of communion to include Catholic social teaching and witnessing to Christ for the whole of humankind.

“Christian community life is not realized spontaneously. It is necessary to educate it carefully.”<sup>18</sup> Creating in young people a sense of community begins first in the home, where children learn the importance of caring for one another and sharing what they have with their parents and siblings. In Catholic families, this experience of community also includes life in the parish as members of a communion of believers. The scope of that community is widened to the extended family, then to the larger community experiences of school and, with God’s Grace, of the universal Church. Religious education in Catholic schools deepens understanding of the importance of community by linking it to the Eucharist and the communal prayer of the Mass. It prepares children and youth to participation, according to their age and abilities, in the life of the Church as lectors, musicians, ushers, catechists, and Eucharistic ministers. The expectations of this strand also promote an appreciation for the religious life and encourage religious vocations.

In this strand, students will learn that their faith, while it is a very personal matter, is not a private relationship between the individual and God. It is a faith lived out in community – in family, in parish and school, in neighbourhood, and with the world community of believers. Students will learn that the communal relationship within the Holy Trinity serves as a foundation and model for all community relationships: God with us, humankind with God, humans with each other and the rest of creation. They will explore the teachings of Christ which tell us that Christian community life is marked by love of neighbour (Jn.

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<sup>18</sup> General Directory for Catechesis (no. 86a).

13:34) and requires a spirit of simplicity and humility (Mt. 18:3), solicitude for the least among us (Mt. 18:6), care for the outcast (Mt. 18:12), the courage to speak out against sin (Mt. 18:15), mutual forgiveness (Mt. 18:22) and the importance of coming together to pray as one community (Mt. 18:22).<sup>19</sup> They will learn how the Church's creeds and doctrinal statements bind us together in a community of faith seeking understanding, and reflect on this unity as a sharing in the life of the Trinity.

Because of its ecclesial nature, the *Living in Communion* strand of religious education should also take into account the need to provide students with an appropriate knowledge of other Christian churches and ecclesial communities. This information will prepare them for participation in ecumenical dialogue at an age-appropriate level and to deeper understand the history of Christianity in general and of Catholicism in particular.

### ***Living in Solidarity***

The strand, *Living in Solidarity* focuses on the responsibilities of all baptized to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and to make Christ's message alive in the lives of all people. This is the mission of those who form the living Body of Christ the Church. As a component in the ecclesial process of evangelization, religious education supports the efforts of catechesis to develop in students an awareness of their responsibility as Catholics to participate in the mission of the Church. By virtue of baptism into the Body of Christ, all Christians are called to a way of life that is itself mission.

*Living in Solidarity* focuses on two primary topics: Catholic social teaching and Mission. While learning about the Church's social teachings, students will explore the biblical source of the principles of social justice and be given opportunities to apply these principles to contemporary local and global social justice issues. Under the topic of Mission, they will learn about life as a vocation that calls all Christians to dedicate their entire life to establishing the Reign of God.

When speaking about the New Evangelization, Pope John Paul II pointed out that the responsibility of preparing all Christians for mission lies primarily with the ordained clergy but he goes on to affirm that Catholic educators have a unique opportunity to develop in students the knowledge, wisdom and characteristics that are required of Christians for authentic witness to Jesus Christ and the good news of the Gospels.<sup>20</sup> Those characteristics include the following:

- Our lives must be in the image of Jesus Christ himself<sup>21</sup>
- We must be in intimate communion with Christ<sup>22</sup>
- We must surrender ourselves to a life of charity<sup>23</sup>
- We must strive to live a life that is both holy and contemplative so that what we proclaim is truth and is done with sincerity<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> General Directory for Catechesis (no. 86a).

<sup>20</sup> Redemptoris Missio, 83.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 88.

- Each of us is called to be a “person of the Beatitudes” (poverty, meekness, acceptance of suffering and persecution, the desire for justice and peace, charity)<sup>25</sup>
- “the characteristic of every authentic missionary life is the inner joy that comes from faith. . . the one who proclaims the “Good News” must be a person who has found true hope in Christ.”<sup>26</sup>

*Living in Solidarity* draws on all the other five strands to build up the characteristics and virtues necessary for a life of mission. This strand teaches students the meaning of vocation and how and why we are called to share our faith with all people. They are taught that Christian living is a way of being that permeates all arenas of life, be it at home, at school, at work, or in social gatherings. Through example, Christians reveal the mystery of God’s love, how to live in right relationship with others within society, how to care for creation, and the joy that comes with living a holy and virtuous life.

*The evangelical attitudes which Jesus taught his disciples when he sent them on mission are precisely those which catechesis [and religious education] must nourish: to seek out the lost sheep, proclaim and heal at the same time, to be poor, without money or knapsack; to know how to accept rejection and persecution; to place one’s trust in the Father and in the support of the Holy Spirit; to expect no other reward than the joy of working for the Kingdom.*  
(GDC no. 86)

*Living in Solidarity* focuses on developing in children and youth a sense of responsibility for being models of Christian living for all those we encounter in our daily lives. The social teaching of the Catholic Church provides examples of how the message of the Gospels is lived out within the diversity of contemporary society and offers students opportunities to apply these teachings to issues that impact their lives.

In teaching children the importance of witnessing to the faith, “it is also necessary to address interreligious dialogue if it renders the faithful capable of meaningful communication.”<sup>27</sup> Although this is the primary focus of Grade 11 World Religions, it also needs to be integrated into the general religious education of students in Catholic elementary schools to form a foundation for further study. Furthermore, the diversity of Canadian society demands we educate children and youth to respect and appreciate the good that is within all religions. Our children and youth can learn to be examples of Christ’s teaching and model this teaching for those non-Christians they encounter in their everyday lives. In this way, they participate in the Church’s practice of authentic interfaith dialogue.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 89-90.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 91.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 91.

<sup>27</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, no. 86.

## ***Praying***

This strand includes education concerning all of the various ways that the Church expresses its faith in prayer and is intimately connected to *Celebrating*. The prayers of the Church are expressed in many forms: “they are blessing and adoration, petition and intercession, thanksgiving and praise.” Each of these forms of prayer can be personal prayer or communal prayer. “The Eucharist contains and expresses all [these] forms of prayer.”<sup>28</sup>

At times, this strand will include the use of the rich prayer forms of the Catholic tradition. At other times, they will include the use of the student’s own words in prayerful response to God’s presence. And at still others, they will include music, drama, meditation, and various art forms as the vehicle through which reverence and faith can be expressed. Helping students grow in their relationship with God – Father, Son and Spirit – means teaching not only knowledge of the various prayers of the Church and their forms, but the attitude with which followers of Christ approach prayer.

*Students should be encouraged to pray with the same sentiments with which he [Jesus] turned to the Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial confidence, supplication and awe for his glory. When catechesis is permeated by a climate of prayer, the assimilation of the entire Christian life reaches its summit.*

General Directory for Catechesis (no. 38)

“In the liturgical year, the Church celebrates the whole mystery of Christ from his incarnation to his return in glory.”<sup>29</sup> It venerates Mary and commemorates the saints on particular days in the liturgical year. The unfolding of the liturgical year provides many learning opportunities for prayer within the school setting. As students prepare for and celebrate liturgies focused on the Church’s liturgical seasons, they:

- learn the importance of creating a sacred space for prayer, of participation, of silence and reverence;
- develop an understanding of prayer as a fundamental part of life and an innate response to God’s love revealed to us in the Sacred Scriptures;
- learn what it means to pray to Mary and the Saints for their intercession;
- deepen their understanding of the symbols of Christianity;
- recognize that Christ is present in a special way during moments of prayer;
- come to know and understand more deeply the message of salvation revealed in the scripture narrative of Christ’s life, death and resurrection;
- learn to turn to prayer and the Scriptures to shed light on the events of their lives and to ask for guidance.

“When we celebrate the mysteries of Christ during the course of the liturgical year, we do not merely recall past events. The liturgy enables us to pass from

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<sup>28</sup> Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (no. 550).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. (no. 242).

our chronological time (past/present/future) and to enter into God's "time of salvation" so that we, through grace and mystery, become present to the event."<sup>30</sup>

### 3.4 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Preparing Catholic children for the completion of their sacramental initiation is a major concern for families, parishes and Catholic schools. Because of the legitimate diversity in pastoral practices concerning the order of these sacraments and the appropriate age at which they should be celebrated, this policy document cannot establish expectations specifically geared to this most important task.

Moreover, changes over the past decades have led to new questions. No longer is it typical to see a single school linked to a single parish. Many schools serve more than one parish, and many parishes see their children served by more than one school. Greater mobility and the regionalization of school boards mean that teachers of religious education often do not belong to the same parish as their students. Religious men and women who used to combine both the roles of parish-based catechist and school-based teacher of religious education have practically disappeared. This requires parishes and schools to clarify their respective roles and to set up structures of collaboration and mutual support in this area.

It should be noted that preparation for the reception of sacraments takes place on two levels, *initial preparation*, which involves an ongoing education in the sacramental life of the Church, and *immediate preparation*, which involves catechetical and practical preparation in the weeks and months leading up to the reception of a particular sacrament. The former, in Ontario, is primarily the responsibility of Catholic schools. The latter, *immediate preparation*, is parish-based and is usually coordinated by the parish priest and parish catechists. This does not mean that home, school and parish work in isolation. In the best case scenario, cooperation between home, school and parish under the direction of the priest and local bishop, leads to the best results.

What then is the role of teachers when it comes to immediate and initial preparation for the sacraments? Teachers fulfill their responsibilities for initial preparation when they teach the content of the religious education programs and, in particular, that content that focuses on knowledge and understanding of the sacraments. Their witness to the children in word and action is also important, as is their repeated emphasis on the importance of Sunday Eucharist for a Christian life and its connection with the other sacraments (Archdiocese of Toronto).

Although *immediate preparation* takes place primarily at the parish level, it is best if parish and school establish a sacramental team consisting of the school principal, vice principal, teacher, parish priest, catechist, and/or sacramental coordinator. This could promote a

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<sup>30</sup> Catholic Update: The Liturgical Year: Simple Facts, Deep Truths. Fr. Thomas Richstratter, OFM.

positive experience for all those involved. Catholic schools can participate with the local parish or parishes by:

- meeting with the parish priest or his delegate to coordinate religious education and catechetical programs with regard to the sacraments;
- using the school newsletter to inform parents about upcoming meetings and other relevant information as requested by the parish priest(s);
- informing parents as to the role parish and school play in the preparation of their children;
- participating in or, if requested by the parish priest, conducting a retreat for those preparing for Confirmation;
- providing space in the school for parish meetings if the parish does not have an appropriate space;
- working in cooperation with the parish to prepare students with special needs for the sacraments;
- participating in enrolment ceremonies, parent sessions and the celebration of the sacraments, as requested by the parish priest.

This understanding of the collaborative role of Catholic schools and parish has a direct affect on the development of expectations and programs for religious education. To accommodate the difference in age for reception of sacraments, education in the sacraments is included in the *Celebrating* strand for each grade. Students are educated about the sacraments at an age-appropriate level so that what they learn will link harmoniously with the catechetical programs provided for *immediate preparation* at the parish. After receiving the sacraments, religious education curriculum continues to deepen their awareness of the significance of these sacraments in their lives and in the life of all Christians. Programs developed from these expectations will need to address this same concern. Education in the sacraments needs to be seen as a lifelong process that can result in a desire for a sacramental understanding and approach to life.

# 4. Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement

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## 4.1 THE ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS

At the heart of religious education is a vision of the person, formed through ongoing encounters with the Trinity for a life of service in and for God. This vision is expressed in the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, which are the starting point for the development of all curriculum in Catholic schools. The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations<sup>(i)</sup> are intended to guide the integration of Catholic teaching into all school curriculum and into the nature of the total school experience. These are the expectations that identify the distinct role and purpose of Catholic Schools in Ontario and as such are of importance to all Catholic educators, as well as the parents and students we serve. Those who teach religious education take on a particular responsibility to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to continue self-directed, responsible, lifelong learning in the faith. Although they are not directly assessed, these expectations are the foundation for the development of the expectations for religious education outlined in this policy document.

The *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* document outlines the following overall expectations for graduates from Catholic schools. The graduate is expected to be:

- A discerning believer formed in the Catholic faith community
- An effective communicator
- A reflective, creative and holistic thinker
- A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner
- A collaborative contributor
- A caring family member
- A responsible citizen

The task for Catholic educators is to guide students toward these expectations with an understanding of the need for lifelong learning and the work of the Holy Spirit to meet these ends.

## 4.2 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*No one comes to the Father except through me. (Jn. 14:6)*

The process of assessment and evaluation of religious education in Catholic elementary schools has been a discussion for Catholic educators for some time. We understand that as

professional educators, we are responsible for assuring that students are growing in their knowledge and understanding of the faith, developing the essential skills for continuous, lifelong, spiritual growth and the fortitude to live out their faith in the events of everyday life. Yet we know that we have no right to judge, in a definitive way, another individual's relationship with God – nor is it actually possible – for much of faith resides deep in the silence of the human heart.

Does this mean we should not assess student success in religious education? The answer to that question is “No.” Teachers have the responsibility to assess student knowledge and understanding of the content of the curriculum, their religious literacy, the development of thinking and communication skills, and their ability to apply what they have learned across various situations and within other disciplines. The subject of evaluation is the successful acquisition of the knowledge and skills outlined in the overall and specific expectations in this policy document.

Our hopes for the continual formation and transformation of students and the deepening of their relationship with God are expressed in the Catholic School Graduate Expectations as visions of the persons they will become due in part to the efforts of their Catholic education. The list of *Hope Expectations* that precedes the overall and specific expectations for each division (primary, junior, intermediate) are there to remind teachers of the essential importance of religious education to the broader process of evangelization. When home, parish and school each perform their tasks well, the Holy Spirit awakens in the child an awareness of God's love, manifested in the person of Jesus and a desire to respond to this gift of love with love.

#### **4.3 ASSESSMENT THAT PROMOTES STUDENT SUCCESS**

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Information gathered through assessment helps teachers to:

- determine students' strengths and weaknesses in their achievement of the curriculum expectations;
- adapt curriculum and instructional approaches to meet students' needs;
- assess the overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices.

The following fundamental principles are foundational guides for the collection of meaningful information that teachers will use to inform instructional decisions, promote student engagement, and improve student learning.<sup>31</sup> They include practices and procedures that ensure that assessment and reporting are valid and reliable, and that they lead to improvement of learning for students, practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;

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<sup>31</sup> Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools; 2010, p.6.

- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course, and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

### ***Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning***

In the document, *Growing Success*, the Ontario Ministry of Education clarifies the purpose of assessment by stating the following:

Assessment is the process of gathering information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a subject or course. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. Assessment for the purpose of improving student learning is seen as both “assessment for learning” and “assessment as learning”. As part of assessment “for learning,” teachers provide students with descriptive feedback and coaching for improvement. Teachers engage in assessment “as learning” by helping all students develop their capacity to be independent, autonomous learners who are able to set individual goals, monitor their own progress, determine next steps, and reflect on their thinking and learning.<sup>32</sup>

The document goes on to describe numerous means by which assessment *for* learning can be gathered and the requirement that:

- all assessment be based on evidence of student achievement of the curriculum standards;
- demonstration of their achievement is assessed in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories of the achievement chart;
- achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories;
- all specific expectations must be accounted for in instruction and assessment.

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<sup>32</sup> *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010 (p.28).

## *Assessment and Evaluation of Learning*

Where assessment *for* and *as* learning focuses on the specific expectations, assessment *of* learning focuses on overall expectations and is used to evaluate students' achievement for reporting purposes. The student's achievement of the overall expectations is based on their achievement of the related specific expectations.<sup>33</sup> The following table summarizes the purpose of assessment, the nature of assessment for different purposes, and use of assessment information.

### **The Purpose of Assessment, the Nature of Assessment for Different Purposes, and the Uses of Assessment Information**<sup>34</sup>

| <b>Purpose of Assessment</b>   | <b>Nature of Assessment</b>   | <b>Use of Gathered Information</b>  |
|--|---|---|
| <b><i>Assessment 'for' learning</i></b><br>“is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there.” (Assessment Reform Group, 2002, p.2) | <b><i>Diagnostic assessment</i></b> occurs before instruction begins so teachers can determine students' readiness to learn new knowledge and skills, as well as obtain information about their interests and learning preferences. | <b><i>Gathered information</i></b> is used by teachers and students to determine what students already know and can do with respect to the knowledge and skills identified in the overall and specific expectations, so teachers can plan instruction and assessment that are differentiated and personalized and work with students to set appropriate learning goals. |
|  | <b><i>Formative assessment</i></b> occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, while students are still gaining knowledge and practising skills.   | <b><i>Gathered information</i></b> is used by teachers to monitor students' progress towards achieving the overall and specific expectations, so that teachers can provide timely and specific descriptive feedback to students, scaffold next steps, and differentiate instruction and assessment in response to student needs.  |
| <b><i>Assessment 'as' learning</i></b><br>“focuses on the explicit fostering of students' capacity over time to be   | <b><i>Formative assessment</i></b> occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, with support, modelling, and  | <b><i>Gathered information</i></b> is used by students to provide feedback to other students (peer assessment), monitor their own   |

<sup>33</sup> Growing Success, p.38.

<sup>34</sup> Growing Success, table 4.1, p.31.

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>their own best assessors, but teachers need to start by presenting and modelling external, structured opportunities for students to assess themselves.” (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 42)</p>   | <p>guidance from the teacher.</p>  | <p>progress towards achieving their learning goals (self-assessment), make adjustments in their learning approaches, reflect on their learning, and set individual goals for learning.</p>  |
| <p><b>Assessment ‘of learning</b> “is the assessment that becomes public and results in statements or symbols about how well students are learning. It often contributes to pivotal decisions that will affect students’ futures.” (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 55)</p> | <p><b>Summative assessment</b> occurs at or near the end of a period of learning, and may be used to inform further instruction.</p> | <p><b>Gathered information</b> is used by the teacher to summarize learning at a given point in time. This summary is used to make judgements about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, to assign a value to represent that quality, and to support the communication of information about achievement to students themselves, parents, teachers, and others.</p> |

### ***Essential Steps in Assessment for and as Learning***

As essential steps in assessment *for* learning and *as* learning, teachers need to:

- plan assessment concurrently and integrate it seamlessly with instruction;
- share learning goals and success criteria with students at the outset of learning to ensure that students and teachers have a common and shared understanding of these goals and criteria as learning progresses;
- gather information about student learning before, during, and at or near the end of a period of instruction, using a variety of assessment strategies and tools;
- use assessment to inform instruction, guide next steps, and help students monitor their progress towards achieving their learning goals;
- analyse and interpret evidence of learning;
- give and receive specific and timely descriptive feedback about student learning;
- help students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment.<sup>35</sup>

## **4.4 EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

All curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction, but evaluation focuses on students’ achievement of the overall expectations. A student’s achievement of the overall

<sup>35</sup> Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools. 2010, pp. 28-29

expectations is evaluated on the basis of his or her achievement of related specific expectations. The overall expectations are broad in nature, and the specific expectations define the particular content or scope of the knowledge and skills referred to in the overall expectations. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations, and which ones will be covered in instruction and assessment (e.g., through direct observation) but not necessarily evaluated.

### ***Levels of Achievement***

The characteristics given in the achievement chart (pages 45-46) for level 3 represent the “provincial standard” for achievement of the expectations as set out by the Institute for Catholic Education and the Education Commission for the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario. A complete picture of achievement at level 3 in religious education can be constructed by reading from top to bottom in the shaded column of the achievement chart, headed “Level 3.” Parents of students achieving at level 3 can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in the next grade.

Level 1 identifies achievement that falls much below the provincial standard, while still reflecting a passing grade. Level 2 identifies achievement that approaches the standard. Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the standard. It should be noted that achievement at level 4 does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for a particular grade. It indicates that the student has achieved all or almost all of the expectations for that grade, and that he or she demonstrates the ability to use the knowledge and skills specified for that grade in more sophisticated ways than a student achieving at level 3.

Providing students with exemplars that illustrate achievement at each of these four levels will help students to understand what is expected of them and will also serve as points of reference in a student/teacher or teacher/parent conference focused on improving student success or reporting to parents.

## **4.5 THE ACHIEVEMENT CHART FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The achievement chart is a standard province-wide guide to be used by teachers. It enables teachers to make judgements about student work that are based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time.

The achievement chart is designed to:

- provide a framework that encompasses all curriculum expectations for all grades and subjects represented in this document;
- help teachers to plan instruction for learning;
- help teachers develop success criteria with their students;
- guide the development of assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);

- assist teachers in providing meaningful feedback to students;
- provide various categories and criteria with which to assess and evaluate student learning.

### ***Categories of Knowledge and Skills***

The categories, defined by clear criteria, represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which the subject expectations for any given grade are organized. The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning. The categories of knowledge and skills are described as follows:

***Knowledge and Understanding:*** Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding).

***Thinking:*** The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes.

***Communication:*** The conveying of meaning through various forms.

***Application:*** The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts.

Teachers will ensure that student work is assessed and/or evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories.

### ***Criteria***

Within each category in the achievement chart, criteria are provided that are subsets of the knowledge and skills that define each category. The criteria for each category are listed below.

***Knowledge and Understanding:*** subject-specific content required in each grade/course (knowledge: e.g. the Seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding: Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation as sacraments of initiation).

***Thinking:*** The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes, as follows:

- theological reflection (e.g. examining issues in light of Scripture and Tradition and determining meaning for life);
- use of planning skills (e.g. identifying an issue, formulating questions and ideas, focusing research, gathering information, organizing an inquiry);
- processing skills (e.g. analysing information, evaluating, synthesizing, detecting bias);
- use of critical/creative thinking processes (e.g. inquiry, problem solving, decision-making, research, critiquing).

***Communication:*** The conveying of meaning through various forms as follows:

- expression and organization of ideas and information in oral (e.g. liturgies, presentation, role play, debate), visual (e.g. chart, model, movement, video, computer graphics), and/or written forms (e.g. prayers, report, journal, opinion piece);
- communication for different audiences (e.g. children, peers, adults) and purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, promote) in oral, visual and/or written forms;
- use of religious education conventions, vocabulary, and terminology (e.g. using correct terminology to discuss social justice issues, in oral, visual and/or written forms).

**Application:** The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts:

- making connections between two related concepts in religious education;
- making connection between religious education and the world (e.g. moral issues, ethically based problems, social justice issues);
- transference of religious knowledge and skills to new contexts (e.g. transfer of moral teachings to the examination of scientific discovery, historical event, economics, art and personal experience).

### **Descriptors**

A “descriptor” indicates the characteristic of the student’s performance, with respect to a particular criterion, on which assessment or evaluation is focused. In the achievement chart, effectiveness is the descriptor used for each criterion in the Thinking, Communication, and Application categories.

What constitutes effectiveness in any given performance task will vary with the particular criterion being considered. Assessment of effectiveness may therefore focus on a quality such as appropriateness, clarity, accuracy, precision, logic, relevance, significance, fluency, flexibility, depth or breadth, as appropriate for the particular criterion. For example, in the Thinking category, assessment of effectiveness might focus on the degree of relevance or depth apparent in an analysis; in the Communication category, on clarity of expression or logical organization of information and ideas; or in the Application category, on appropriateness or breadth in the making of connections. Similarly, in the Knowledge and Understanding category, assessment of knowledge might focus on accuracy, and assessment of understanding might focus on the depth of an explanation.

Descriptors help teachers to focus their assessment and evaluation on specific knowledge and skills for each category and criterion, and help students to better understand exactly what is being assessed and evaluated.

### **Qualifiers**

A specific “qualifier” is used to define each of the four levels of achievement – that is, *limited* for level 1, *some* for level 2, *considerable* for level 3, and a *high degree* or *thorough* for level 4. A qualifier is used along with a descriptor to produce a description of

performance at a particular level. For example, the description of a student's performance at level 3 with respect to the first criterion in the Thinking category would be: "the student uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness."

The descriptions of the levels of achievement given in the chart should be used to identify the level at which the student has achieved the expectations. Students should be provided with numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations across all four categories of knowledge and skills.

| <b>The Achievement Chart for Religious Education Grades 1 - 8</b>  |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Categories   | 50-59%<br>(Level 1)  | 60-69%<br>(Level 2)   | 70-79%<br>(Level 3)   | 80-100%<br>(Level 4)  |
| <b>Knowledge and Understanding</b> – Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)                        |  |   |   |   |
|  | <b>The student:</b>  |   |   |   |
| Knowledge of content (e.g. scripture, creedal statements, terms, moral teachings, liturgical/sacramental practices)  | demonstrates limited knowledge of content                                | demonstrates some knowledge of content                                | demonstrates considerable knowledge of content                                | demonstrates thorough knowledge of content  |
| Understanding of content (e.g. dogma, doctrine, scripture, moral principles, social teachings, concepts, practices, procedures)  | demonstrates limited understanding of content                            | demonstrates some understanding of content                            | demonstrates considerable understanding of content                            | demonstrates thorough understanding of content                                    |
| <b>Thinking</b> – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes  |  |   |   |   |
|  | <b>The student:</b>  |   |   |   |
| Use of planning skills (e.g. focusing research, gathering information, organizing an inquiry, asking questions, setting goals)   | uses planning skills with limited effectiveness                          | uses planning skills with some effectiveness                          | uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness                          | uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness                          |
| Use of processing skills (e.g. analyzing, generating, integrating, synthesizing, evaluating, detecting point of view and bias)   | uses processing skills with limited effectiveness                        | uses processing skills with some effectiveness                        | uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness                        | uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness                        |
| Use of critical/creative thinking processes (e.g. theological reflection, inquiry, critical analysis, problem solving)   | uses critical/creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness     | uses critical/creative thinking processes with some effectiveness     | uses critical/creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness     | uses critical/creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness     |
| <b>Communication</b> – The conveying of meaning through various forms  |  |   |   |   |
|  | <b>The student:</b>  |   |   |   |
| Expression and organization of ideas and information (e.g. clarity of expression, logical organization) in oral, visual, and written forms (e.g. prayers, reflections, presentations, reports) | expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness | expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness | expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness | expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness |

|  |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Communication for different audiences (e.g. peers, adults) and purposes (e.g. liturgies, to inform, persuade) in oral, visual, and written forms                                 | communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness               | communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness               | communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness               | communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness               |
| Use of conventions (e.g. religious language, religious symbols, media usage), vocabulary, and terminology in oral, visual, and written forms                                     | uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with limited effectiveness | uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with some effectiveness | uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with considerable effectiveness | uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness |
| <b>Application</b> – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts   |  |   |   |   |
|  | <b>The student:</b>  |   |   |   |
| Application of knowledge and skills (e.g. concepts, strategies, processes) in familiar contexts  | applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness               | applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness               | applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness               | applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness               |
| Making connections within and between various contexts (e.g. past/present/future, between text and personal knowledge or experience, between texts, disciplines and world views) | makes connections between and within various contexts with limited effectiveness           | makes connections between and within various contexts with some effectiveness           | makes connections between and within various contexts with considerable effectiveness           | makes connections between and within various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness           |
| Transfer of knowledge and skills (e.g. concepts, strategies, processes) to new contexts  | transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness                  | transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness                  | transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness                  | transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness                  |

## ***Learning Skills and Work Habits***

In the document, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, the Ministry of Education identifies six learning skills and work habits that are integral to a student's learning: responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, and self-regulation.

To the extent possible, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation for religious education, should not be considered in the determination of a student's grades. Clarification and examples of when it is not possible to separate the evaluation of the development of the learning skills and work habits from the evaluation of the achievement of the curriculum expectations in the determination of a student's grades are provided on page 10 of *Growing Success*. On page 11, sample behaviours for each learning skill and habit are provided to assist teachers in the instruction, assessment and evaluation of the learning skills and work habits.<sup>36</sup>

The development of learning skills and work habits should be included in the planning of activities and assessment opportunities for all disciplines including religious education and reported on the elementary progress report card and provincial report card where indicated. Developing learning skills and work habits contributes substantially to student success. It is important that students and their parents are made aware of these expectations and understand their important contribution to effective learning. Students benefit when teachers:

- discuss and model effective learning skills and work habits;
- work in conjunction with parents to help students develop these skills;
- share with students how these skills will be assessed and evaluated.

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<sup>36</sup> *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010.

# 5. Some Considerations for Program Planning in Religious Education

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## 5.1 CROSS-CURRICULAR AND INTEGRATED LEARNING

One of the primary goals of religious education is the application of faith to all aspects of life: our relationship with family and friends, our approach to work, our understanding of life's purpose, the critique of culture, how we are called to live in society and so on. To accomplish this goal, students need well-designed programs that allow for meaningful connections with other discipline areas, especially in relationship to the worldview that accompanies introduction to specific concepts and the values directly or inadvertently attached to new learning and the life skills required to fulfill the related tasks.

Religious activity is an integral part of contemporary culture. It is a complex affair, one that involves a worldview that addresses such interrelated questions as the nature of the human person, the origins of space and time, patterns for social living, the importance of history as the remembered past, and the distinction between wisdom and knowing.

These ultimate life questions serve as a basis for inquiry and exploration concerning related fields such as history and science, literature and art, philosophy and the study of business. Each discipline provides a point of view that favours certain values and attitudes towards the world, values that can be scrutinized and discussed from a religious perspective. The application of religious knowledge and attitudes to the mutual benefit of self, society, and environment is also supported by the connection between religious education courses and other disciplines. Skills such as the ability to ask moral questions, to apply Sacred Scripture to life, to find meaning in suffering, and to take responsible action toward living things and the environment apply not only to religious education, but to the physical and social sciences as well.

Cross-curricular learning provides opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in a particular subject area to related concepts in other subject areas. For example, when children learn that God created the universe for us and that God sees all of creation as “good”, this concept of the goodness of God’s creation sheds light on environmental issues. When they understand the dignity of persons and its source in God, they are better prepared to reflect on issues of social justice – the importance of work, the care of the poor and the sick, stewardship of the environment, bullying, or prejudice.

In cross-curricular learning, students are provided with opportunities to learn and use related content knowledge and/or skills in two or more subject areas. For example, a concept explored in religious education can be applied to the analysis of literary texts or as proof text in a science project. Christian Renaissance art and music can be used as part of a history lesson or for art or music appreciation. A lesson on anti-bullying should always be

contextualized within a clear understanding of human dignity and rights based on the message of the Gospels. When speaking about the importance of integration, the General Directory for Catechesis states:

*It should also be remembered that the most successful catechesis is that which is given in the context of the wider pastoral care of young people, especially when it addresses the problems affecting their lives. Hence, catechesis should be integrated with certain procedures, such as analysis of situations, attention to human sciences and education, the co-operation of the laity and of young people themselves. (GDC no. 184)*

Integrated learning involves making links between expectations from different subject areas and creating activities, lessons or units that provide multiple opportunities for reinforcement and demonstration of acquired knowledge and skills across a range of settings. For example, the tradition of Catholic social teaching offers a distinctive perspective on environmental issues. Its consistent respect for all life, including creation and its sacramental view of our God-centred universe, calls all persons to accountability for the care of the earth. A unit of study on diversity could bring together expectations from science (diversity in ecosystems), values education (equity and diversity) and religious education (the diversity of all life gives glory to God the Creator).

Integrated learning provides students with a meaningful context for the application of new knowledge and skills and an opportunity to develop thinking and reasoning skills that promote the transference of knowledge and skills from one subject area to another.

## **5.2 RELIGIOUS LITERACY**

*Inculturation of the faith, under certain aspects, is a linguistic task. This implies that catechesis respect and value the language proper to the message, especially biblical language, as well as the historical-traditional language of the Church (creed, liturgy) and doctrinal language (dogmatic formulations). It is also necessary for catechesis to enter into dialogue with forms and terms proper to the culture of those to whom it is addressed. Finally, catechesis must stimulate new expressions of the Gospel in the culture in which it has been planted. In the process of inculturating the Gospel, catechesis should not be afraid to use traditional formulae and the technical language of the faith, but it must express its meaning and demonstrate its existential importance.*

General Directory for Catechesis (no. 208)

Religious education, as all other disciplines, has its own specific language. Acquiring knowledge and understanding of the faith and promoting faith development requires the acquisition of religious literacy, that is literacy related to Sacred Scripture, the main tenets of the faith, the moral teaching of the Church, liturgy and prayer, the principle of social justice, and the nature of life in community and of the Church's mission in the world. The language of religious education includes special terms that are recognized as belonging to this discipline alone; (e.g. ciborium, Eucharist, Holy Week and resurrection).

Many of the activities and tasks students undertake in order to acquire or demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the curriculum of religious education involve the use of written, oral, and visual communication skills. As part of these tasks, students will be encouraged to use theological language with accuracy and precision, thus enhancing their ability to communicate effectively.

As students advance through the grades, they will also be expected to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, to determine their validity and relevance, and to use them in appropriate ways.

The General Directory for Catechesis, in discussing the nature of educating for mission, suggests that religious literacy should not be limited to that of Christianity but extended to include other faiths.<sup>37</sup> One of the important factors for overcoming cultural and religious intolerance is knowledge and understanding of the 'other' coupled with an opportunity for cross-cultural and interreligious dialogue. Given the ever-increasing reality of Canada's religious mosaic, students should be gradually exposed to the language of other religions and this exposure can begin with an exploration of significant religious feasts that are often acknowledged in the media, such as the Jewish holy days of Rosh Hashanah or the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The graduate is expected to be an **effective communicator** who:

(a) Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values.

(b) Reads, understands and uses written materials effectively.

(c) Presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others.

(d) Writes and speaks fluently one or both of Canada's official languages.

(e) Uses and integrates the Catholic faith tradition, in the critical analysis of the arts, media, technology and information systems to enhance the quality of life.

In a culture where communication is increasingly commercialized, we are invited to prayer and to worship.

*Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*

<sup>37</sup> General Directory for Catechesis, no. 86b

### 5.3 CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking is self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. The development of critical thinking skills is central to a well-planned religious education program. Students are frequently asked to critically analyze Sacred Scripture for what it might mean to them in their personal lives, to examine and make judgements regarding social and environmental issues in light of Church teaching, to explore all sides of a situation to make moral decisions, or to critically examine media and its message. They are asked to look for bias, compare and contrast different viewpoints, find contradictions or determine next steps. Students who think critically:

- process information by actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analysing, synthesizing, and evaluating information;
- understand the importance of gathering information using numerous approaches: observation, experience, research (e.g. books, Internet, CD-ROM, video), reflection, introspection, reason, and dialogue with others;
- are open to new ideas and perspectives;
- acknowledge the existence of absolute truths and the importance of universally held values such as the need for clarity, relevance, sound evidence, logic, depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding;
- work to develop intellectual integrity, humility, civility, empathy, a sense of justice;
- rely on the power of reason but are not closed to the reality of absolute truth;
- acknowledge the fact that even the best efforts can be negatively affected by flawed reasoning, irrational thought, prejudices, biases, un-critiqued social rules and taboos;
- are concerned about others and world issues;
- recognize the complexity of many issues and focus on identifying the greater good;
- commit themselves to life-long self-improvement;
- recognize self-examination (metacognition, reflection and contemplation) as necessary for self-improvement.

Critical thinkers reflect on ideas or situations in order to understand them fully, identify their implications, make a judgement, and use this judgement to guide decision making. Critical thinking includes skills such as questioning, analyzing, synthesizing, identifying values and issues, detecting bias, examining often diverse opinions, and distinguishing between alternatives. It involves an inquiry process of exploring questions about and solutions for issues that are not clearly defined and for which there are no clear-cut answers. Students who are taught these skills become critical thinkers who go beyond the obvious solution to imagine other possibilities, approaches or answers.

In religious education, critical thinking skills include but are not limited to reflection, assessment, analysis and evaluation of life issues in light of Sacred Scripture and Church teaching. Students are called to interpret the meaning of various passages of Sacred Scripture, to compare the message of the gospel with that of society and the media and so on. Students use critical thinking skills in religious education when they assess the impact people can have on such things as the environment, the poor or the lonely. They use problem-solving skills when they apply the Church's principles of social justice to such issues.

At a personal level, critical thinking is known as metacognition, the process of thinking about one's own thought processes. Student assessment can include a form of metacognition that asks students to monitor their own learning. Journaling, for example, is a form of self-assessment that asks students to reflect on a new concept and how it affects their lives, to reflect on the process used to complete a task or on the quality of their product, to assess their strengths and needs, or to assess their participation and cooperation in a group project. Many self-assessment tools have been developed and are very useful in helping students develop ways to become self-reflective, self-regulated, and self-directed learners.

Students are to become **reflective, creative and holistic thinkers** who:

- a) Recognize there is more grace in our world than sin, and that hope is essential in facing all challenges.
- b) Create, adapt, evaluate new ideas in light of the common good.
- c) Think reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems.
- d) Make decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience.
- e) Adopt a holistic approach to life by integrating learning from various subject areas and experience.
- f) Examine, evaluate and apply knowledge of interdependent systems (physical, political, ethical, socio-economic and ecological) for the development of a just and compassionate society.

*Ontario Catholic School Graduate  
Expectations*

To develop critical thinking skills, students should be encouraged to explore multiple and diverse opinions and values, to look for bias and its effect, and to formulate a personal opinion based on a critical analysis of the information they have gathered.

## **5.4 LEARNING SKILLS AND WORK HABITS**

The development of learning skills and work habits needed to succeed in school and in life begins early in a child's schooling. As students move through the grades, they develop and then consolidate their learning skills and work habits in preparation for post-secondary education and the world of work.<sup>38</sup> It is important for students to develop basic learning skills and work habits that play a significant role in the student's achievement of the curriculum expectations. *Growing Success* points out in particular the following: responsibility, organization skills, initiative, self-regulation, and the ability to work independently and collaboratively. Although they are not to be considered as part of the letter grade or percentage mark for religious education, the Ontario Ministry of Education provides a place for reporting on student progress in the development of these skills to provide parents and students with information that will guide future development of these skills.

## **5.5 REFLECTION AND THE USE OF CURRENT EVENTS**

Journal reflections, silent meditation, contemplative prayer, peer discussions and self-assessment are all effective forms of reflection that are important processes in any catechetical or religious education program. As a catechetical method, self-reflection deepens understanding and fosters meaning in students' lives. As an educational tool, reflection provides students with a structured opportunity to add depth to what they have learned, to clarify their thinking, to record their thoughts and observations, and to discuss how new information affects them personally or society in general.

Through group reflections or projects, students develop the ability to discuss their faith with others as they apply Christian values to current events or moral issues. Through journals, reflective essays, independent projects and portfolios that ask students to apply learning to contemporary events and moral issues, teachers can determine how well students are able to examine real-life situations in light of Scripture and Tradition, from a personal perspective.

Most importantly, personal and group reflection encourages the development of personal faith development and commitment to participation in the mission of the Church, to bring the message of the Gospels to the world through word and example.

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<sup>38</sup> *Growing Success*, pp. 44-45

## **5.6 NUMERACY AND INQUIRY/RESEARCH SKILLS**

Aside from developing religious literacy, the religious education curriculum also builds on and reinforces certain aspects of the mathematics curriculum and provides students with numerous opportunities to develop research skills. For example, clear, concise communication may involve the use of various diagrams, charts, maps, tables, and graphs to organize, interpret, and present information. Religious education also provides the opportunity for students to apply the processes of problem solving, communicating, connecting, analysis.

As part of the religious education curriculum, students will develop their ability to ask questions and reflect critically on issues. They need to learn a variety of research methods in order to gather and critique data, and to know which methods to use in a particular inquiry. Students need to learn how to locate relevant information from a variety of sources, such as books, newspapers, field studies and interviews, photographs, diagrams and charts, and electronic sources (e.g. videos, CD-ROMs, the Internet). As they advance through the grades, students will be expected to use these sources with increasing sophistication. They will also be expected to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, to determine their validity and relevance, and to use them in appropriate ways.

When integrating mathematics and research skills as expectations into religious education, care should be taken to ensure that the expectations are consistent with those for research and mathematics in the same grade.

## **5.7 PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

Religious education courses emphasize the use of communication skills in both written and oral forms using various media. Appropriate choice of instructional methods and settings for ESL/ESD students will help to ensure that course expectations are met. In some cases, some or all of the expectations will need to be modified.

For students who enter Ontario's English language schools having a first language other than English, the cultural and linguistic adjustment can be quite challenging. This accounts for approximately 20 percent of students attending English language schools in Ontario, with the Greater Toronto Area being the most linguistically diverse. These students may be newcomers to Canada or students born in Canada, but living in families where English is not spoken or is not the first language of choice. Those who are new to Canada may not have attended an educational system equivalent to that of Ontario or, may have significant gaps in their education. Teachers share a large portion of the responsibility for their English language development.

Research has shown that an age-appropriate proficiency in a first language contributes to the ease at which a new language is learned. Although acquisition of English requires that students primarily use English at school, it is also important that teachers build into their curriculum opportunities for English language learners to share their culture and language

with other students in the classroom. These students add a cultural dynamic to the classroom that promotes appreciation for Canada's diversity. Their cultural and linguistic experiences are the foundations upon which English literacy is to be built. Parents and the local community can be a great resource for continuing the development of the student's first language as a means for supporting the development of fluency in English.

In Ontario schools, teachers who specialize in ESL/ESD provide support for English language learners through two distinct programs:

**English as a Second Language (ESL)** programs are for students born in Canada or newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.

**English Literacy Development (ELD)** programs are primarily for newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools, and who arrive with significant gaps in their education. These children generally come from countries where access to education is limited or where there are limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Some Aboriginal students from remote communities in Ontario may also have had limited opportunities for formal schooling, and they also may benefit from ELD instruction.

In planning programs for children with linguistic backgrounds other than English, teachers need to recognize the importance of the orientation process, understanding that every learner needs to adjust to the new social environment and language in a unique way and at an individual pace. For example, children who are in an early stage of English-language acquisition may go through a "silent period" during which they closely observe the interactions and physical surroundings of their new learning environment. They may use body language rather than speech or they may use their first language until they have gained enough proficiency in English to feel confident of their interpretations and responses. Students thrive in a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment that nurtures their self-confidence while they are receiving focused literacy instruction. When they are ready to participate in paired, small-group, or whole-class activities, some students will begin by using a single word or phrase to communicate a thought, while others will speak quite fluently.

With exposure to the English language in a supportive learning environment, most young children will develop oral fluency quite quickly, making connections between concepts and skills acquired in their first language and similar concepts and skills presented in English. However, oral fluency is not a good indicator of a student's knowledge of vocabulary or sentence structure, reading comprehension, or other aspects of language proficiency that play an important role in literacy development and academic success. Research has shown that it takes five to seven years for most English-language learners to catch up to their English-speaking peers in their ability to use English for academic purposes. Moreover, the older the children are when they arrive, the greater the language knowledge and skills that they have to catch up on, and the more direct support they require from their teachers.

Responsibility for students' English-language development is shared by the classroom teacher, the ESL/ELD teacher (where available), and other school staff. Volunteers and peers may also be helpful in supporting English-language learners in the science and technology classroom.

Teachers must adapt the instructional program in order to facilitate the success of these students in their classrooms. Appropriate adaptations include:

- modification of some or all of the subject expectations so that they are challenging but attainable for the learner at his or her present level of English proficiency, given the necessary support from the teacher;
- use of a variety of instructional strategies (e.g. extensive use of visual cues, graphic organizers, scaffolding, previewing of textbooks, pre-teaching of key vocabulary);
- peer tutoring, strategic use of students' first language;
- use of a variety of learning resources (e.g. visual material, simplified text, bilingual dictionaries, and materials that reflect cultural diversity);
- use of assessment accommodations (e.g. granting of extra time, use of oral interviews, demonstrations or visual representations, or tasks requiring completion of graphic organizers or cloze sentences instead of essay questions and other assessment tasks that depend heavily on proficiency in English).

While the degree of program adaptation required will decrease over time, students who are no longer receiving ESL or ELD support may still need some program adaptations to be successful. If a student's program has been modified, a checkmark must be placed in the ESL/ELD box on the student's report card. If the student requires modified expectations, the appropriate statement from the Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1–8, 1998 (page 8) must be inserted.<sup>(ii)</sup>

## **5.8 PLANNING PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS**

*Education for All: Kindergarten to Grade 6, 2005* outlines the following guiding principles when educating students with special educational needs:

- All students can succeed.
- Universal design and differentiated instruction are effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students.
- Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, tempered by experience.
- Classroom teachers are key educators for a student's literacy and numeracy development.
- Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning.
- Fairness is not sameness.

Classroom teachers have the responsibility to promote learning for all students under their care, including students with special education needs. In most classrooms, students demonstrate a wide range of strengths and needs. This calls for:

- the development of numerous and varied learning strategies and performance tasks that respect this diversity and will ensure that all students have the opportunity to benefit as much as possible from the learning experience;
- flexible groupings for instruction;
- modification based on continuous assessment and evaluation to accommodate a diversity of needs;
- a carefully developed plan that outlines specific objectives and educational services to support the special educational needs of identified students.

When planning and delivering a program for students with special education needs, classroom teachers often work in collaboration with special education teachers to identify the student's level of development, learning abilities, and needs to ensure that education programs are designed to accommodate their particular needs and to facilitate the student's growth and development.

In planning religious education programs for students with special education needs, teachers should begin by examining the curriculum expectations for the appropriate grade level of the individual student in light of his or her strengths and learning needs to determine which of the following options is appropriate for the student:

- no accommodation or modification;
- accommodations only (individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment); or
- modified expectations, with the possibility of accommodations (may include the use of expectations at a different grade level and/or an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of expectations relative to the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level); or
- alternative program, not derived from the curriculum expectations for a subject/grade or a course.<sup>39</sup>

If the student requires either accommodations or modified expectations, or both, the relevant information, as described in the following paragraphs, must be recorded in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).<sup>(iii)</sup>

### ***Students Requiring Accommodations Only***

Some students with special education needs are able, with certain accommodations, to participate in the regular curriculum and to demonstrate learning independently. Providing accommodations to students with special education needs should be the first option considered in program planning. Instruction based on the principles of differentiated

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<sup>39</sup> Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, p.71

instruction focuses on the provision of accommodations to meet the diverse needs of learners. Differentiated instruction requires effective instruction that shapes each student's learning experience in response to his or her particular learning preferences, interests, and readiness to learn.

### **Accommodation Methods**

***Instructional accommodations:*** changes in teaching strategies (e.g. styles of presentation, methods of organization, use of technology and multimedia).

***Environmental accommodations:*** adapting the environment of the classroom/school to meet the needs of the student (e.g. lighting, furniture, sound, decor).

***Assessment accommodations:*** changes in assessment procedures that enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning (e.g. visual support to clarify verbal instructions, alternative methods for students to demonstrate achievement of expectations).<sup>40</sup>

When assessing and evaluating students who require only accommodation in religious education, the expectations in this resource for the appropriate grade level are to be used as a basis. Do **not** check the IEP box on the report card or provide information on the accommodation.

### ***Students Requiring Modified Expectations***

Modifications are changes made to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet the student's learning needs. Modifications may include:

- the use of expectations at a different grade level, and/or
- an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level.

Learning expectations should be reviewed in relation to the student's progress at least once every reporting period and changes made as needed. (IEP Standards, 2000, p. 11)

Assessment and evaluation of student achievement for students with modified religious education programs is based on the religious education expectations in the IEP and on the achievement levels outlined in the religious education policy document. On the Provincial Report Card, the IEP box must be checked for religious education and the appropriate statement from the *Guide to the Provincial Report Card: Grades 1-8, 1998* (page 8) must be inserted. Teacher comments should present relevant information regarding the student's demonstration of the modified expectations and next steps.

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<sup>40</sup> Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, p. 72.

## 5.9 EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In the school year 2010-2011, all school boards in the province of Ontario put in place equity and inclusive education policies to create an education system in which:

- all students, parents, and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected;
- every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning (*Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*, Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 10)

A school climate based on the principles of equity and inclusivity is one where all members of the school community feel safe, welcomed and accepted, regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status. Students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, in a physical environment which honours diversity and respects the dignity of all individuals.

The religious education program in Catholic schools directly addresses issues of equity and inclusivity. The Gospels reveal to students Christ's message of love and calls each person to responsibly participate in building up the kingdom of God, a kingdom where all are welcome, where each person is cared for and loved, where humility and poverty are chosen over pride and wealth. The *Living a Moral Life* strand develops problem-solving skills and offers numerous opportunities for students to examine contemporary examples of prejudice and discrimination, and reflect on the personal and social consequences of such actions. The *Living in Communion* and *Living in Solidarity* strands develop in students a sense of community and social responsibility while preparing them to bring their faith to all aspect of their lives – to bring Christ's message to the world.

The principles of Catholic social teaching that are presented in the strand *Living in Solidarity*, help students understand how the message of the Scriptures is to be lived out in the choices and actions of everyday life as a response to God's call to care for the sick, the crippled, the lonely and the outcast. Developing a sense of social justice prepares students to participate in society as positive and constructive members who value diversity, the equality of all persons and the basic rights and freedoms Canada offers to all its citizens.

## 5.10 THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Information and communications technology (ICT) provides a range of tools with a unique capacity to extend and enrich teachers' instructional strategies and students' learning in social religious education. Information and communications technology can be used to connect students to other schools, at home and abroad, and to bring global issues and the beliefs of other Christian denominations and world religions into dialogue with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Computer programs can help students to collect, organize, and sort the data they gather and to write, edit, and present reports on their

findings. The technology also makes it possible to use simulations – in geography, for instance – when field studies on a particular topic are not feasible.

Whenever appropriate, therefore, students should be encouraged to use ICT to support and communicate their learning. For example, students working individually or in groups can use computers, CD-ROM technology, and/or Internet websites to gain access to religious art and music, primary documents such as papal encyclicals and letters from the Ontario/Canadian Bishops or Bishops' conferences from around the world, excerpts from the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church or its compendium and so on. Students can also use digital cameras and projectors to design, script, and present the results of their research to their classmates. Although the Internet is a powerful learning tool, all students must be made aware of issues of privacy, safety, and responsible use, as well as of the ways in which the Internet can be used to promote bigotry and hatred.

Teachers will also find the various ICT tools useful in their teaching practice, both for whole class instruction and for the design of curriculum units that contain varied approaches to learning to meet diverse student needs.

## **5.11 GUIDANCE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The guidance and career education program should be aligned with the religious education curriculum. Teachers need to ensure that the classroom learning across all grades and subjects provides ample opportunity for students to learn how to work independently (e.g. complete homework independently), cooperate with others, resolve conflicts, participate in class, solve problems, and set goals to improve their work. The religious education program can prepare students to approach their future career as service to the common good of society and a participation in the mission of the Church to bring the message of Christ to the world.

The religious education program can also offer opportunities for a variety of career exploration activities, including visits from guest speakers such as catechists, deacons, ordained priests and nuns, monks, those in lay ministries at the local parish, as well as contacts with career mentors, involvement in simulation programs and attendance at career conferences.

Teachers should ensure that vocations to the religious life and to careers within the Church are well-represented in any school activity that provides opportunities for learning about future careers.

## 5.12 HEALTH AND SAFETY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Although health and safety issues are not usually associated with religious education, they may be important when the learning involves field trips. Out-of-school field trips can provide an exciting and authentic dimension to students' learning experiences.

Teachers must preview and plan these activities carefully to protect students' health and safety.

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<sup>(i)</sup>The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations were developed by the Institute for Catholic Education, (1998) and are available on the ICE website at: [www.iceont.ca](http://www.iceont.ca)

<sup>(ii)</sup>Information regarding English as a Second language was adapted from the Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Science and Technology published by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

For further information on supporting English language learners, refer to the following documents:

- *Supporting English Language Learners in Grades 1 to 8: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators*, 2008
- *Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, Grades 3 to 12*, 2008
- *English Language Learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, 2007
- *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom – A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators*, 2005

<sup>(iii)</sup>More detailed information about planning programs for students with special education needs, including students who require *alternative programs*, can be found in The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide, 2004 (referred to hereafter as the IEP Resource Guide, 2004). For a detailed discussion of the ministry's requirements for IEPs, see Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation, 2000 (referred to hereafter as IEP Standards, 2000). (Both documents are available at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).)

## 6. Expectations

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### Hope Expectations: Primary

*By the end of grade 3, it is our hope that students will be individuals who:*

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Believing</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Are curious and open to hearing the saving story of our Christian faith;</li> <li>❖ Actively reflect on God's Word as communicated through the passages of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures;</li> <li>❖ Stand in wonder and awe before God's self-revelation in creation and in the mysteries of the Catholic faith proclaimed in the Apostles' Creed.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Celebrating</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cherish the sacramental life of the Church as the gift of God's presence in our lives to nourish, restore, guide and form us as children of God;</li> <li>❖ Participate freely in the Sacrament of Eucharist as the central sacrament of the Catholic faith and the Sacrament of Reconciliation to strengthen and renew their relationship with Jesus;</li> <li>❖ Find hope and faith in the story of salvation that unfolds through the celebrations of the five seasons of the Church's liturgical year.</li> </ul>                                      |
| <b>Living a Moral Life</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Desire to know what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus and a child of God;</li> <li>❖ Strive to live according to the moral examples Jesus provided through his words and actions;</li> <li>❖ Acknowledge sin, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness as part of life's journey and seek forgiveness when they have offended another, both from the one they have offended and from God.</li> <li>❖ Appreciate God as one who forgives and heals those who sin and Christ's death on the Cross as the source and sign of our redemption.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Living in Communion</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognize Jesus as a companion and friend who travels with them on the journey of their lives;</li> <li>❖ Reflect on the example of the Saints as models for their own lives;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the communal nature of human persons and the communal nature of the Church: communion with God and all of God's creation.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Living in Solidarity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Appreciate all of creation as gift and actively fulfill their responsibility to be stewards of God's creation;</li> <li>❖ Acknowledge all life as sacred.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Praying</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Seek intimacy with God and celebrate communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship.</li> </ul>  |

# Grade 1: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- God has revealed himself to humankind gradually communicating the mystery of God in deeds and in words. [CCC no. 69]
- God reveals himself to humankind in creation, our first parents, in the promise of salvation and in his covenant with Noah, Abraham and Moses. [CCC nos. 70-72]
- The fullness of God's self-revelation is manifested in the incarnation of God's Word; the person of Jesus who is truly God and truly human. [CCC no. 73]

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Creed professes God as Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.
- Sacred Scripture reveals God as a Trinity of persons; God the Father is revealed by the Son who in turn reveals both the Father and the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit reveals and ensures the presence of Christ in the Church on earth and the ongoing experience of the divine in the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church, founded by Christ, finds her nourishment and strength in Sacred Scripture which she reveres as the Word of God.

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of the Bible (i.e. Word of God) as the inspired story of the Revelation of God (i.e. Plan of Loving Goodness) that unfolds in stages and finds its fullest expression in Christ Jesus. [CCC nos. 50-73; 456-682]

BL2: Demonstrate how in the Scriptures, the people gradually came to know God as "Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth". [CCC nos. 50-73; 101-104; 142-184; 198-354; 422-682]

BL3: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church as a people who are formed into a believing community by God's Word (i.e. Scripture – inspired story of Jesus Christ). [CCC nos. 101-141; 748-975]

## *Specific Expectations*

BL1.1: Examine a selection of Scripture passages to discover how God has gradually revealed his love for us: first to Adam and Eve, then through his Covenant with Noah, Abraham, Moses and the Prophets and finally through the gift of His own Son, Jesus through whom God's full and definitive revelation is accomplished. [CCC nos. 50-73]

BL1.2: Retell scripture passages that show how God formed a people who were his own (i.e. Israel) and demonstrate an understanding of the Old and New Testament as a collection of stories inspired by God and written by his people so that they can share their knowledge of God with others. [CCC nos. 50-73]

BL1.3: Recognize in a selection of scripture passages that Jesus is the "Word of God become human" to communicate God's love and forgiveness (Luke 1:26-38 – Annunciation; Luke 1:39-45 – Visitation; John 1:1-1 – and the Word became flesh; Jesus the good shepherd – John 10:11-18; the parable of the prodigal son – Lk. 15:11-32; the lost sheep – Lk. 15:3-7) and link this to an understanding of the Gospels as the inspired story of Christ Jesus. [CCC nos. 50-73; 456-682]

BL2.1: Identify the various images of God the Father that Jesus presents in the Gospels and describe what those images tell us about God and how he shows his love for us (e.g. merciful/forgiving father – Lk. 15:11-32, the parable of the Prodigal Son; Luke 15:3-10, the lost sheep; God is Love/Charity – John 4:16; John 3:16; perfect – Matt. 5:48; Lord of Heaven and Earth – Matt. 11:35). [CCC nos. 50-73; 422-682]

BL2.2: Examine a selection of Old and New Testaments that reveal God as "Father" – Isaiah 9:6, 64:8; Matt. 5:16, 5:45, 6:6) "Almighty" (Ps. 33:11-13; 48:14; 50:6, 68:19-20; 84:11-12; Proverbs 30:5), and "Creator of Heaven and Earth" (Gen. 1) and use a variety of strategies to communicate their message (e.g. drama, retell, art). [CCC nos. 50-73; 198-354]

BL2.3: Describe the experience of how we come to know and recognize our parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, etc. (i.e. as children we gradually come to recognize their face, their voice, their acts of love) and relate this natural way of knowing to the process of how God has communicated to us gradually through Scripture his "face" (e.g. in stages – Creation, Covenants – Abraham and Moses, the Commandments, Prophets) and especially in the face of his Son - Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 50-73; 101-104; 198-231; 422-455]

BL3.1: Demonstrate an understanding of the Gospels as the inspired narrative accounts of Jesus Christ (i.e. paschal mystery - his life, his ministry, his death and resurrection) and retell narrative that tell the story of God's love and plan of salvation for us. [CCC nos. 101-130]

BL3.2: Describe the various ways that Sacred Scripture is used in the Church to strengthen our faith, to form the common life and teaching of the Church (i.e. communal prayer and celebrations, teaching, etc.). [CCC nos. 131-141]

BL3.3: Compare how families and communities are formed and defined by their common history and stories (i.e. our family ethnicity, culture, language and important relatives who are deceased) to how the Christian Church is formed into a believing community and defined through the inspired stories of Sacred Scripture which reveal our relationship to God, Jesus and to one another. [CCC nos. 101-114]

# Grade 1: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- Through the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), the baptized become members of the Body of Christ. They are strengthened in their witness of Christ, in forming the community of the Church and in the participation of its mission in the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Eucharist is an action of thanksgiving to God, a memorial sacrifice and presence of Christ, which becomes the source and summit of all Christian life.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Liturgical Year of the Church celebrates God's plan of salvation revealed in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus i.e. Paschal Mystery recorded in Scripture.
- The Liturgical seasons are marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours which have developed throughout the Tradition of the Church and which have become part of our experience of faith in Christ as expressed in the yearly life of the Church.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Baptism

Understand that the Church celebrates our life in Christ and the Church through sacraments. [CCC nos. 1211-1284]

CL2: Understand that through the celebration of Mass (Sacrament of the Eucharist) we offer thanksgiving and praise to God the Father as a community of disciples who believe in and follow Jesus. [CCC 1345-1361]

CL3: Demonstrate an understanding of the liturgical seasons of the year as an annual unfolding of the mysteries of Christ celebrated in the liturgies of the Church through signs/symbols, rituals, words/actions. [CCC nos. 1135-1141, 1145-1162]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Recognize through the baptismal narratives of the Gospels the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the words and symbols of the Sacrament of Baptism and the gifts we receive i.e. new creation, forgiveness of sins, sanctifying grace, and virtues of faith, hope and love. (*Possible Gospel passages: Baptism with water – Mt. 3:1-6, 11-12; Baptism of Jesus – Mt. 3:13-17; Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Matt. 28:18-20; repent and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:38.*) [CCC nos. 1217-1224, 1250-1255; 1262-1284]

CL1.2: Demonstrate an understanding of how God speaks to us through the ritual actions and symbols of the sacraments and link each of the ritual actions and symbols of Baptism to their spiritual/theological meaning (*i.e. water/purification and sharing in Christ's life; white garment/putting on Christ – new life in Christ; Paschal candle/receiving the Light of Christ; Oil of the Catechumen/strengthen by the gifts of the Holy Spirit; Sacred Chrism Oil/we share in Christ's priesthood by active participation in worshipping God through the sacraments, witnessing to God's Word in word and deed, use the gifts of the Spirit to lead and serve*). [CCC nos. 1229-1245; 1262-1284]

CL1.3: Describe Baptism as the Sacrament that welcomes us into the Church and connect the spiritual experience of being welcomed into the Church through the sacrament of Baptism to the human experience of being born into the world and welcomed into the community of one's family.

CL2.1: Retell Gospel narratives that provide examples of Jesus inviting others to become part of a community and describe how they expressed their thanksgiving to God for the experience of His love (*e.g. Luke 9:10-17; Matt. 9:9-13; Acts 2:1-21; John 4:1-15; Luke 5:27-32; Mt. 14:13-21, 15:32-39; Jn. 2:1-11*). [CCC nos. 1334-1337]

CL2.2: Identify the various ways we express our thanksgiving to God through our participation in the liturgy of the mass (*i.e. symbols, songs, words, ritual actions*). [CCC nos. 1345-1355]

CL2.3: Listen to the words and the prayers of the Mass to identify why we as a community express our thanksgiving to God through Christ. [CCC nos. 1359-1361]

CL 3.1: Retell using a variety of strategies, the Scripture narrative related to each liturgical season (e.g. the Annunciation, the Birth of Jesus, the visit of the Magi, the death and resurrection of Jesus) and link them to the symbols that unfold their meaning.

CL3.2: Identify in a selection of covenant narratives from the Old Testament and the New Testament, signs of God's plan to save the "chosen people" (OT) and the "Body of Christ,"

(NT) and relate these scripture passages to the sacramental and ritual prayer celebrations of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost (*e.g. Moses parts the waters, God sends manna in the desert, the Annunciation, the Birth of Jesus, the Baptism of Jesus, gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church*). [CCC nos. 1150-1152; 1156-1162]

CL3.3: Identify the various ways people communicate with each other and express their thoughts and feelings (*e.g. words, signs, symbols, expressions*) and relate this to the use of symbols, gestures, rituals and words in the liturgies of the Church to unfold the mysteries of Christ and a sense of waiting and hope, new life and joy, wonder and thanksgiving throughout the seasons of the liturgical year. [CCC nos. 1145-1149]

# Grade 1: Living a Moral Life

**Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

**Big Ideas:**

- The human person who is made in the “image of God” is called to live and act in ways that reflect this dignity.

**Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

**Big Ideas:**

- God has created human persons with free will and reason (the ability to choose to do what is good or what is not good).
- All human actions have consequences for which we are responsible and that should be considered when making a moral decision.

**Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

**Big Ideas:**

- We are called to grow in holiness and to express this in a life of charity and perfection.
- Mary is the perfect model of holiness for she was constantly obedient to the will of God.

## *Overall Expectations*

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding that we are created in the “image of God” and that this gift calls us to live in a way which reflects this truth. [CCC nos. 1699-1715]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding that we are able to think (i.e. use our reason) about our actions and to know that they affect our relationship with God, other people, and ourselves. [CCC nos. 355-384; 1778-1779]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding that as human beings God calls us to grow in holiness (i.e. to grow in charity and goodness). [CCC nos. 946-975; 1474-1477; 1812-1829; 2012-2016]

## ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Retell gospel narratives that reveal how Jesus welcomes and cares for people by showing them they have dignity in the eyes of God i.e. made in the image of God. [CCC nos. 544, 1823-25]

ML1.2: Explain why it was so important for Jesus to be born a human person like us in every way except sin (he shared in our human life and provided for us a perfect example of how we can live and treat others as the “image of God”). [CCC nos. 1701, 1708-09]

ML1.3: Identify through Scripture (i.e. Genesis 1) that God has created the world we live in and made human beings to be unique (i.e. with a spiritual soul, intellect, free will, reason and an exalted vocation), and demonstrate how our human life is a gift to us and to others. [CCC nos. 1700-1705]

ML2.1: Listen to Gospel narratives that reveal the consequences of choosing not to obey God’s will (e.g. Lk. 16:19-31 – Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus; Matt. 24:45-51 – Parable of the Faithful and Unfaithful Slave; Matt. 26:69-75 – Peter denies Jesus three times). [CCC no. 532]

ML2.2: Identify situations that call us to choose between doing actions which are good or those actions which are harmful (e.g. not sharing, making fun of others, not telling the truth, etc.). [CCC nos. no. 1777-1782; 1786-1789]

ML2.3: Identify the different actions that we are capable of doing as human beings (e.g. natural actions such as eating, sleeping, running, etc.) and those actions that we are able to think about (i.e. use our reason) before we act and that have consequences of being good or harmful to others and to ourselves. [CCC nos. 1777-1782]

ML3.1: Retell a selection of Gospel narratives in which Jesus teaching his disciples “to be holy, as your Heavenly Father is holy” and name ways that this was to be shown in our lives (i.e. fruits of charity – joy, peace, friendship and mercy). [CCC nos. 1812-1829; 2012-2016]

ML 3.2: Explain why the Church has chosen Mary and the saints as examples of holiness for us to also imitate in our lives. (Mary is the perfect example of obedience to the will of God, born and lived free from sin, co-operated with God’s plan of salvation by her obedience, faith, hope and charity, suffered with Jesus at the foot of the cross and ascended to heaven where she intercedes for us on earth; the saints are examples of how Christians should co-operate with God’s plan of salvation by living exemplary lives of prayer, hope and charity, constantly striving to be holy, faithful witnesses to the Truth of Jesus Christ.) [CCC nos. 946-975; 1474-1477; 2012-2016]

ML3.3: Describe ways in which children can be examples of holiness (by imitating Jesus Christ’s love for others, being faithful, charitable and obedient to God’s will). [CCC nos. 2012-2016]

# Grade 1: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church and the Family are both communities where we come to know God and the mysteries of our faith.
- God has chosen the Church to be an instrument to build up the reign of God on earth.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is a Communion of Saints including those who have lived lives of faith before us and the faithful who live lives of faith today.
- Through Jesus, we are all members of God’s family and should follow his example of holiness.
- We pray to the Saints to intercede on our behalf because they have a special relationship with God and we pray for the faithful departed to help them obtain eternal life with Christ.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand that when we come to believe in God (Trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) we can experience God’s love in the community of the Church he formed. [CCC nos. 214-237; 758-760; 781-786]

LC2: Demonstrate an understanding of the community of the Church as the experience of life as human and divine, visible and invisible; as a communion of saints. [CCC nos. 748-780, 946-948, 328-336]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Demonstrate an understanding of the “mysteries of faith” that we come to know of God through belonging to the Church (i.e. God is Truth, God is Love, God is One, Trinity-God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit). [CCC nos. 214-237]

LC1.2: Listen to a selection of scripture passages and identify how those who gather around Jesus are fed and nourished both physically and spiritually as they come to know

God. (Feeding of the 5000 – Matt.14:13-21, Mary and Martha – Luke 10:38-42, Jesus washes the disciples’ feet – John 13:1-20)

LC1.3: Compare the characteristics of a family with the characteristics of the Church (*e.g. who can belong, how do people become members, who is the head and who guides the members, what rules govern behaviour, what is the role of the group, what is the end goal of each community?*) and identify ways both can be places where we learn about God. (*Note: in the Church all people can be members, membership by baptism and faith; joined to Christ and the Holy Spirit, dignity because the Spirit dwells in them, the law of love, mission to witness to Christ, their destiny is the Kingdom.*) [CCC nos. 781-782]

LC2.1: Identify within the Scriptures the images and symbols that reveal the relationship of Jesus to the Church (*e.g. St. Paul – human body, Shepherd – sheepfold and lost sheep, Vineyard – Vine and branches, Feeding of the 5000, Holy Temple, etc.*). [CCC nos. 751-769]

LC2.2: Describe what it means to belong to God’s family and the community of the Church (*e.g. through baptism we are accepted into a sharing in the life of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*). [CCC nos. 1655-58, 2232-33, 2201-8]

LC2.3: Compare the experience of being part of a loving family (living members who are present to us, those living away from us, and deceased relatives) with the concept of the Communion of Saints (*i.e. the visible and invisible Church, the Church as both human and divine*) and demonstrate how we help each other through our prayers. [CCC nos. 954-959; 961-962; 2683]

# Grade 1: Living in Solidarity

## **Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

### **Big Ideas:**

- God made human persons in His own image and likeness (i.e. we are communal by nature, endowed with a spiritual and mortal soul, intelligence, and free will) and we share a special relationship with God (God calls each of us by name).
- Human dignity is rooted in being created in God's image.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus taught us about the dignity of all people and how we are to identify with and to love our neighbour.
- The Church community promotes the dignity of the poor and outcast through acts of friendship and charity.
- Offering friendship and charity promotes the proper development of persons and allows them to achieve their full potential as human beings.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be made in God's image both in our equality and diversity and explain why this is the source of our human dignity. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1948]

LS2: Focus: Human Dignity

Understand that as human beings made in God's image we are social by nature and are called both as individuals and as a community to offer friendship and charity to all people.

## ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be made in God's image (i.e. out of love for us God has created the human persons as unique within all of Creation; capable of knowing and loving our Creator God; as a communion of body and soul; we share in God's divine life and thus participate in the dignity of God; God has made himself known to us in Jesus who calls us into a loving relationship). [CCC nos. 356-384]

LS1.2: Provides examples of how God has made human beings equal yet different in their being (i.e. equally loved by God and offered faith equally for our salvation; different in the talents and responsibilities we have been given; different ethnic and racial backgrounds;

different genders, ages, and different challenges and needs) and identify the benefits of diversity. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1948]

LS1.3: Examine selected Scripture passages to identify the significance and importance of God calling a person by name (e.g. Isaiah 43:1 – I have called you by name; Psalm 139:1-18 – God formed us to be his own; Genesis 7:1-8 – God changes Abram’s name to Abraham) and compare this to the importance of calling others by their given name as a sign of respect. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1948]

LS2.1: Examine selected Gospel narratives to identify ways that Jesus promoted the dignity of the poor and the outcast by restoring and healing their social relationships (e.g. the healing narratives, the meal narratives) and link human dignity to being made in God’s image. [CCC nos. 1877-1896]

LS2.2: Name ways that the Church participates in communal acts which reach out to families and individuals and suggest how these acts promote relationships and recognize the dignity of those in need (food drives, visits to the sick and elderly, summer camp for children). [CCC nos. 1877-1896]

LS2.3: Provide examples of what it means to be ‘social by nature’ and how relationships can support and nourish our development as human beings. [CCC nos. 1877-1896]

# Grade 1: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer is a gift from God which draws every person into a personal relationship with the living and true God.
- Jesus turned to his Father through prayers of praise and petition during his life and is the perfect model of a life of prayer.
- Prayer is central to the spiritual life of all Christians in order to grow in holiness, for moral and spiritual development and for all pastoral ministry of service.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer:* Forms and Expressions of Prayer

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer has many forms and expressions found in Scripture and Tradition – blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise, vocal, meditative, and contemplative.
- Prayer is structured and spontaneous, individual and communal, and is enriched by a variety of elements that deepen the experience of prayer (silence, symbols, gospel reading, reflection, images, music, etc.).

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand that prayer is essential to having a relationship with God, with Christ and with one another. [CCC 2559-2565; 2095-2098; 2697-2699; 2685-2688; 2664]

PR2: Understand that there are many ways to pray to deepen our relationship with God the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and in communion with Mary and the saints. [CCC 2663-2699]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Identify times when Christians pray individually and in communal gatherings, when they pray daily and weekly (*i.e. at Mass, grace before meals, morning prayers and before going to sleep, at the beginning of each school day, in times of need e.g. Sickness*). [CCC nos. 2697-2699; 2785-2688]

PR1.2: Demonstrate an understanding of prayer as expressions of our relationship with God, Christ and others and learn to recite the common prayers of this living community (*i.e. Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory to God*). [CCC nos. 2623-2625; 2664]

PR1.3: Demonstrate different ways in which we express what is in our “mind and heart” and different ways our belief in God can be expressed in the activity of prayer (e.g. words, gestures, songs, movement and dance) as an expression of love and gratitude. [CCC nos. 2559-2565; 2095-2098]

PR2.1: Recognize the various places, symbols and images that create sacred space in our lives (e.g. Church, prayer corner, Advent wreath, candle, Jesse tree, Bible, art/statue/icons, Crucifix) and to identify ways these elements can deepen their experience of prayer to God, Jesus and Mary (silence, music, ritual action/movement). [CCC nos. 2673-2679; 2691-2699]

PR2.2: Experience and demonstrate skill in being able to use a variety of prayer forms (e.g. spontaneous prayer, traditional prayer such as the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be, petitions, etc.). [CCC nos. 2663-2699]

PR2.3: Demonstrate an understanding of prayer as both a human and spiritual act which helps us to deepen our belief in God, Jesus, Mary and the saints and strengthen our relationship with them. [CCC nos. 2663-2699]

# Grade 2: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The fullness of God's self-revelation is manifested in the incarnation of God's Word; the person of Jesus who is truly God and truly human. [CCC no. 73]
- Sacred Scripture reveals God as a Trinity of persons; God the Father is revealed by the Son who in turn reveals both the Father and the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit reveals and ensures the presence of Christ in the Church on earth and the ongoing experience of the divine in the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- In the Creed the Church professes the central mystery of the faith which can only be fully known through God's revelation embraced through the light of faith.
- Together Jesus and the Spirit fulfill God's plan of salvation.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church, founded by Christ, finds her nourishment and strength in Sacred Scripture which she reveres as the Word of God.

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of Sacred Scripture as God's self-revelation through Jesus as One and yet a Trinity of persons. [CCC nos. 232-278; 456-534]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of our profession of faith as a belief in the Blessed Trinity: God the Father as Creator, Jesus as the Son who is both human and divine, and the Holy Spirit as the giver of life who ensures the presence of Christ in the Church. [CCC nos. 185-278; 456-534]

BL3: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church as a community that gathers to worship and give thanks for the gift of God's only begotten Son who is present in the Eucharist and is formed by the celebration of the Eucharist. [CCC nos. 1322-1419]

## *Specific Expectations*

BL1.1: Examine a selection of biblical passages from the New Testament in which God reveals Jesus as the Son of God and the second person of the Blessed Trinity and the Holy Spirit as the Third person of the Blessed Trinity. (Matt. 3:16-17 – Baptism of Jesus; Matt. 28:19; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26-56 – the annunciation and visitation; John 14:16-17, 23) [CCC nos. 232-278; 456-534]

BL1.2: Examine scripture passages to identify the oneness of God (1Cor. 8:4; Isa. 45:5; Deut. 6:4; John 14:16-17, 23; Rom. 8:9; John 12:45; John 14:9; John 10:30)

BL1.3 Examine a selection of scripture passages to identify and describe that the mission of Jesus, the Son and the Holy Spirit is to fulfill the Father's plan of salvation (i.e. creation, redemption and sanctification – Matt. 16:27; 1 Timothy 1:15; John 14:6; John 3:5-6; Matt. 3:11, John 14:15-17; Luke 2:40). [CCC nos. 232-278]

BL1.4: Demonstrate an understanding of the Trinity as a central belief of Christianity yet a mystery that inspires wonder and awe and can never be understood by reason alone. [CCC nos. 232-237]

BL 2.1: Demonstrate an understanding of the basic characteristics of our Christian faith (belief in the One God also means belief in the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit; faith is trust in the truth and goodness of God; God's plan for us is a gift from God freely given and freely received; faith and reason work together to enlighten our understanding of God; listening to God's Word nourishes faith). [CCC nos. 151-165]

BL 2.2: Describe the Creed as a summary of what Christians believe and highlight what the Creed reveals about God (God as One, God as a Trinity of Persons, God as Almighty, Father, Creator of heaven and earth; Jesus as the second person of the Trinity, Son of God, human and divine, suffered for our sins, died, rose and ascended into heaven, will come to judge; Holy Spirit as giver of life, proceeding from the Father and the Son, third Person of the Trinity i.e. one in being with the Father and Son). [CCC nos. 232-278]

BL 2.3: Examine a selection of Scripture passages from the Old and New Testaments to find references to God as Father/Creator (Gen. 1-2; Luke 2:41-52; Matt. 5:48; John 1:3; John 3:16; John 14:23; Luke 10:21-22; John 14:9-11; Matthew 23:9), Jesus as the Son of God (John 20:28; Mark 1:9-11; Matt. 1:23, 17:1-8; Lk. 1:26-38), and the Holy Spirit as God's gift for the glorification and sanctification of the Church (Matthew 1:20; Matthew 28:19; John 14:25-26). [CCC nos. 185-278]

BL2.4: Identify time in the liturgical life of the Church when Christians are invited to make a profession of faith in the belief that God is a Trinity of Persons (e.g. before receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, during the Mass and during the Easter Vigil, when making the sign of the cross).

BL3.1: Explain how in the Eucharist we all share in the presence of Christ, first at the table of the Word (i.e. by listening to the Scriptures we are united in Christ the Word who forms our thinking, speaking and acting) and secondly at the table of the Eucharist (i.e. we receive in communion the Body of Christ and are united in this action of reception). [CCC nos. 1345-1355; 1391-1401]

BL3.2: Describe the four parts of the Mass and identify the Words, symbols and actions of the priest that reveal God's presence (e.g. Gospel narratives – words, actions and symbols of Jesus at the Last Supper are similar to symbols, words and actions found in the Mass). [CCC nos. 1337-1344; 1373-1381]

BL3.3: Compare how common shared experiences help to shape families and communities (i.e. celebrations of joy and sadness – birth and death; playing and learning together, sharing our thoughts and feelings) to how the shared celebration of Mass forms the Christian community (i.e. listening to God's Word, singing and praying together, and receiving communion). [CCC nos. 1322-1332; 1345-1355; 1391-1401]

# Grade 2: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Grace is a favour, the free unconditional gift of God's help given to us so that we can respond to his call to become children of God.
- The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to cleanse us from our sins and turn us back to God (conversion).

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Eucharist is a memorial sacrifice and presence of Christ, which becomes the source and summit of all Christian life.
- In the celebration of the Eucharist/Mass, we are invited to offer our lives for the good of others thus participating in the sacrifice Christ made for us.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church celebrates the Liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time to coincide with and unfold the Paschal Mystery of Christ's life.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Reconciliation/forgiveness and Eucharist/sacrificial love

Understand that the Church celebrates God's presence and his gift of love in the sacraments. [CCC nos. 1322-1344, 1422-1449]

CL2: Understand that the celebration of the Eucharist is a remembering of Jesus' love for us i.e. a memorial sacrifice, in which he invites us, through the liturgy of Mass to participate. [CCC nos. 1362-1372, 1382-1390]

CL3: Understand that throughout the liturgical year, the Church unfolds the mysteries of Christ's life, death and resurrection making Christ present to us through Liturgy of the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist. [CCC nos. 1168-1171]

## ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Examine a selection of gospel narratives that reveal God’s grace as a gift that changes lives (*healing and teaching gospel narratives*) and the sacrifice of love we are to offer to God out of gratitude. (e.g. 1 Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 9:13 and 12:7; Matthew 5:23-24); and connect these narratives to the gift of Grace in the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist (*i.e. removes sin and purifies our soul, forms us to act justly and with charity*). [CCC nos. 1425-1429; 1443-1445]

CL1.2: Define the meaning of “Grace” and compare the need for God’s grace to effect salvation to our need of other “super-natural” aids to sustain a happy, healthy life (e.g. infants depend on our parents to feed us, to keep us safe, and to teach us how to walk, speak, etc.).

CL1.3: Identify ways we encounter the presence of God (*i.e. in the created world, in other human beings and in Jesus Christ*) and explain what these encounters teach us about how we experience and share in God’s love (*i.e. healing, forgiveness, strength*).

CL2.1: Examine the account of the Last Supper in John 13:1-35 and explain what Christ was teaching his disciples by washing their feet. (We share in Christ’s self sacrifice when we place others before ourselves and serve them.)

CL2.2: Demonstrate an understanding of the Mass as a true sacrifice of love in which God offers His son for our salvation and connect this with the benefits we received through the reception of the sacrament (*unites us with Jesus and the Church, washes venial sin away, nourishes the Church as physical food nourishes the body for a life of service to others*). [CCC no. 49]

CL2.3: Describe why the Mass is a remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ in which we are invited to participation (*through the liturgy of the Mass, Christians remember the sacrifice of Christ; we receive God’s love through this sacred meal and share it through lives of service*). [CCC nos. 1322-1323; 1362-1368]

CL3.1: Examine the narrative of the Last Supper proclaimed on Holy Thursday (the covenant – Matt. 26:17-30; remembrance/covenant – Lk. 22:7-23) and describe the New Covenant that Jesus established with the Church and which continues through the Liturgy of the Mass. [CCC nos. 1084-1091]

CL3.2: Articulate an understanding of how the Holy Spirit prepares the Church and each person for the reception of Christ’s real presence in Eucharist, the sacred meal of the Mass. [CCC nos. 1091-1112]

CL3.3: Share a personal understanding of how God can bless us in our lives, which is a divine and life-giving action and relate this to the importance of the Eucharist and the life-giving action of Jesus. [CCC nos. 1077-1083]

# Grade 2: Living a Moral Life

**Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

**Big Ideas:**

- The human person's ultimate vocation in the Christian moral life is guided by the Beatitudes (i.e. natural and Christian happiness)

**Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

**Big Ideas:**

- The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and Church Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.
- In the introductory rite of the Mass, God calls us to repent and offers us forgiveness for our sins; through the Mass the Holy Spirit inspires us to seek God's forgiveness and Grace.

**Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

**Big Ideas:**

- Through the sacraments God offers an unconditional gift of Grace; to receive it we must accept it with humility recognizing our dependence on God for all that we accomplish in this world that is good.
- God assists us in living the Christian life through grace which Christ has merited for us and which we can merit by the way we live our lives.

## *Overall Expectations*

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding that God's promise of Love is revealed in Jesus and is expressed in his teaching, especially the Beatitudes. [CCC nos. 1716-1729]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding that God has established Laws to guide us (i.e. to judge) in deciding (i.e. choice) how to act and that when we act in ways that break God's Law of Love we need to seek forgiveness from God and from the ones we have offended. [CCC nos. 1849-1851; 1946-1986; 2052-2082]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding that God wants to help us through the gift of His grace to live a Christian life and that we can respond to this gift by the way we live our lives. [CCC nos. 1996-2005; 2006-2016]

## ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Examine the teaching of Jesus in the Beatitudes and identify what they teach us about what it means to be truly happy. [CCC nos. 1716-1717]

ML1.2: Examine the Beatitudes to summarize the characteristics that mark us as Beatitude people and use examples to illustrate how living the Beatitudes can change who we become and how we relate to others (i.e. we become more humble, merciful, pure of heart, selfless, meek, seekers of righteousness, peace and justice; our actions are based on love). [CCC nos. 1720-1729]

ML1.3: Recognize that God has placed a natural desire for happiness in the human heart and explain why and how this is a sign of God's love (God loves us so much he wants us to be happy; the desire for happiness draws us to the One who can fulfill that happiness and to the gift of the heavenly kingdom). [CCC nos. 1718-1719]

ML2.1: Identify those passages found within the New Testament which illustrate the following themes: Love of God and neighbour, sin, God's mercy and forgiveness, and explain how they can guide us in judging our relationships with parents, friends and teachers. [CCC nos. 1965-1986; 1846-1951]

ML2.2: Identify certain actions in our lives which demonstrate our lack of love for God and our neighbour (i.e. sin) and how in the Eucharist Jesus extends to us the gift of God's mercy and forgiveness for our sins (Introductory Rite). [CCC nos. 1849-1851; 1391-1401]

ML2.3: Identify the Law of God in the Old Testament (i.e. Ten Commandments) and in the New Testament (i.e. Commandment of Love) and show how they guide us in making choices to act in ways that show love to God and our neighbour. [CCC nos. 1949-1986; 1786-1789; 1847]

ML3.1: Identify the specific graces that come from God and that we receive in our lives when we celebrate the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist and explain how they help us to live the Christian life and how we should respond. [CCC nos. 2006-2011]

ML3.2: Identify how we receive grace from God and identify ways we can use the gift of Grace to help others and build up the Church. [CCC nos. 1996-2005]

ML 3.3: Describe ways in which children can grow through human assistance in their lives (e.g. try new things, overcome obstacles, etc.) and then relate this to the "free and undeserved help" that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God (i.e. grace). [CCC nos. 1996-2005]

# Grade 2: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is the Body of Christ called, united and commissioned by Jesus for mission to the world.
- Life in the Body of Christ is marked by faith hope and charity.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is a Communion of Saints including those who have lived lives of faith before us and the faithful who live lives of faith today.
- In the celebration of the Eucharist, the communion of saints worship and praise God as one.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand that the community of the Church is called to celebrate communion with Jesus. [CCC nos. 783-796; 1337-1344]

LC2: Understand that when the Church celebrates the Eucharist, the communion of the saints and our own ancestors in faith are present. [CCC nos. 1369-1372; 1402-1405]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Identify in the story of the Last Supper how Jesus' actions united the disciples for mission (Jesus washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love; he instituted the Eucharist as a memorial and commanded them to celebrate it until he returned) and communicate how Christ's actions continue today in the Church (through the Eucharist and through our actions of love and service). [CCC nos. 1337-1344]

LC1.2: Identify in selected scripture passages, how Jesus gathered his disciples and taught them about their unity "through him, with him and in him" and identify how we celebrate this unity in the celebration of the Mass. (Gospel sources: through him – Jesus calls the first disciples – Mark 1:16-20; with him – Jesus appoints the twelve Apostles for mission – Mark 3:13-19; In Him – Christ the vine and we the branches – Jn. 15:4-5; communion with Christ's body – John 6:56; His promise to remain with them and the gift of the Holy Spirit – Jn. 14:18, 20:22; Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:33)

LC1.3: Identify actions and roles that unite us as families, those which build up relationships and those which sometimes diminish these relationships in our families and circle of friends and relate these to the actions and roles that unite us as Church.

LC2.1: Retell the stories of Jesus where he cared for the sick, restored those thought to be dead to new life (e.g. official's son, the little girl, Lazarus) and identify what Jesus has revealed about what God wants for the Church community (i.e. to be present for each other and with Jesus at all times, both in life and after our death). [CCC nos. 1813, 1823, 2011, 2069]

LC2.2: Give examples of how the Church remembers its Christian ancestors throughout the year (e.g. feast days, images, prayers, etc.) and at the celebration of the Eucharist (e.g. Eucharistic prayer – include saints, martyrs, apostles and especially Mary the Mother of God). [CCC nos. 1172-1173]

LC2.3: Describe how our families remember ancestors (i.e. loved ones who have died) when they come together as a community and how this is done when the Church gathers to remember Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 1369-1372]

# Grade 2: Living in Solidarity

**Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

**Big Ideas:**

- Our relationship with Jesus and with others is deepened by our participation in the Mass: the Introductory Rite bestows forgiveness; the Liturgy of the Word imparts wisdom and knowledge of God; the Communion Rite strengthens and nourishes for mission, love and sacrifice; and the Dismissal sends us forth to witness to Christ in our words and deeds.

**Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

**Big Ideas:**

- Jesus taught us about the dignity of all people and how we are to identify with and to love our neighbour.  
The Church community promotes the dignity of the poor and outcast through acts of friendship and charity.

## *Overall Expectations*

LS1: Understand that the Eucharist deepens our relationship with Jesus so that we are prepared to be God's messengers and witnesses to the Risen Christ in our communities (i.e. families, school and society). [CCC nos. 1137-1355; 1391-1491]

LS2: Focus: Option for the poor and vulnerable

Understand that we are responsible for the gift of our dignity as human beings and are to respect this gift in others (i.e. our neighbour) by following the example of Jesus who calls us to share (i.e. Eucharist) serving the needs of others. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

## *Specific Expectations*

LS1.1: Retell the events of the Emmaus story Luke 24:13-35 and connect this encounter to our celebration of the Eucharist and the call to become a witness to the Risen Lord. [CCC nos. 1402-1491]

LS1.2: Name the four parts of the Eucharistic Mass and describe the various ways each part deepens our friendship in Jesus and give examples of how we share God's friendship with others in our family, school, and Church. [CCC nos. 1345-1355]

LS1.3: Identify and communicate using specific examples from the lives of the students what it means to be sent forth from the Mass with the exhortation (i.e. encouragement) to ... “go in peace to love and serve the Lord”. [CCC nos. 1391-1401]

LS2.1: Retell scripture passages which show the poor, the outcasts and the marginalized discovering their dignity and being invited to share meals of friendship with Jesus. (e.g. Zacheus, tax collector, etc.) and link them to the human need for acceptance, fellowship and love. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Demonstrate an understanding of the bread and wine, prayers and sacrifice of the Eucharist as representative of the gift of ourselves – our human dignity to God and that the Holy Spirit transforms these gifts to reflect a new dignity which we share with Jesus. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Identify ways we can express to God that we respect the gift of our “human dignity” and show respect toward others (i.e. family and school communities) through our prayers and actions. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

# Grade 2: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- In the Mass, God speaks to us through his Son and we respond as one body in silent prayer and in the prayers of the Mass to God through Jesus.
- The Mass is the central prayer of the Church; through our full participation we praise God as one voice, one Body of Christ.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer:* Forms and Expressions of Prayer

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer is structured and spontaneous, individual and communal, and is enriched by a variety of elements that deepen the experience of prayer (silence, symbols, gospel reading, reflection, images, music, etc.).

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand that the Eucharist is a communal prayer of the Church and that our full, active and conscious participation at Mass unites us in prayer with Christ and one another. [CCC nos. 2565; 2623-2625; 2637; 2643; 2099-2100]

PR2: Understand that Christians have developed certain rhythms of prayer and that prayer can take many forms that are used in personal prayer, communal prayer and in the particular celebration of the liturgy. [CCC nos. 2626-2649; 2777-2802]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Demonstrate an understanding of the Liturgy of the Eucharist as the central communal prayer of the Church and explain why and how we should participate fully in the Mass (singing, praying the responses, listening to the Scripture readings, enacting the rituals – sign of the cross, standing, kneeling, genuflecting). [CCC nos. 1346-1347]

PR1.2: Understand the importance of the Liturgy of the Word and how listening attentively to the scripture readings at Mass or being involved in Bible Study programs, we can learn how to deepen our life of prayer as Christians. [CCC nos. 2652-2655]

PR1.3: Describe the event of Pentecost (*the Holy Spirit descended upon the gathered apostles and gave them the grace to proclaim the Gospels to the world through word and act*) and link this event to the fellowship that existed among the believers in the early Christian Church after they had been gathered together by the Holy Spirit (*Acts 2:43-47*)

*i.e. teaching, praying and breaking bread together, gathering daily in the temple court, sharing all they have with each other, etc.). [CCC nos. 2623-2625; 2670-2672]*

PR2.1: Demonstrate a basic understanding of the order and structure for the Prayers of the Faithful (Prayers of Intercession – Church, World, Local Community, specific needs) and use the format to create prayers of intercession for moments of prayer in class or in the church (e.g. a liturgy of the Word, school Mass). [CCC nos. 1349; 2634-2636]

PR2.2: Identify that our prayer as Christians should include the needs of other people, the Church, social/environmental issues in our world and how we offer spontaneous prayers of petition for them in our individual and communal prayers. [CCC nos. 2629-2636]

PR2.3: Identify how Christians develop certain rhythms of prayer (i.e. times in the day, on rising, morning prayer in school, at meal times, at Mass, at bedtime) so that they might experience prayer as a continuous dialogue with Jesus. [CCC nos. 2659-2672; 2697-2699]

# Grade 3: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- Sacred Scripture reveals the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Father at the moment of Creation, with the chosen people of the Old Testament and as inseparable from Jesus in their mission to the world; the Father is the source and origin of the whole divinity.
- The "Father and the Son" are revealed by the "Holy Spirit" who was sent from the Father and the Son to remain with the Church forever. [CCC nos. 243-267; 687-780]

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- Because of her obedience to God's will and her constant presence with Jesus throughout the entire paschal mystery of his life, the Creed professes Mary as the first disciple of Christ.
- Because Mary is the Mother of God and Christ Jesus is the head of the Body of Christ, Jesus offered her to us as the Mother of the Church.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The mission of the Church given to all the faithful, sends us forth to spread the Good News to all people of the world through action, word and deed and to unite them with Christ, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Mt. 28:19-20; cf. Mk. 16:15-16)

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding that the "Father and the Son" are revealed by the "Holy Spirit" who was sent from the Father and the Son to remain with the Church forever. [CCC nos. 243-267; 687-780]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of Mary as the first disciple and Mother of Church. [CCC nos. 963-970]

BL3: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church as a community formed by the mission that it received from Christ (i.e. to announce the Good News – to evangelize through the witness of holiness, teaching and of service to others as Jesus did). [CCC nos. 535-570; 687-780]

### ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Articulate an understanding of the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit as revealed in Sacred Scripture (i.e. Father as the source and origin of the whole divinity – John 8:42; John 15:26; Rom. 5:5; Creation and the presence of the Spirit – Gen. 1:26, 2:7, 3:22). [CCC nos. 245; 2789]

BL1.2: Identify and explain what specific Gospel narratives reveal about the relationship of the Holy Spirit with God the Father, Jesus and the Church (e.g. John 14:15-17, 25-26; John 15:20-26; John 16:7-8, 13-15; Romans 8:26). [CCC nos. 243-267; 687-780]

BL 1.3: Explain what Sacred Scripture and the Sacraments of the Church reveal about the role and nature of the Holy Spirit (Holy Spirit as the breath of God, giver of life, Advocate, source of wisdom, councilor, gatherer of people, fount of all truth makes Jesus present in the Eucharist, teaches us how to pray). [CCC nos. 243-267; 687-780]

BL2.1: Examine a selection of gospel passages to identify the meaning of disciple and explain why Mary's life is a model of discipleship (Matt. 12:50 the criteria for discipleship; Luke 1:26-38 annunciation – Mary's obedience to the will of God; Luke 1:38-45 visitation – Mary proclaims the Good News to Elizabeth who proclaims Mary as Blessed and Mother of God; Luke 1:46-55 Magnificat – Mary praises God; Luke 2:49-50 the challenges of Mary's discipleship; John 19:25-27 Mary as faithful disciple at the foot of the Cross; Acts 1:13-14 Mary is one of the disciples gathered at Pentecost).

BL2.2: Examine the teaching of the Church to explain why Mary is called the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church. [CCC nos. 963-970]

BL2.3: Identify the many devotions to Mary that have developed in the Tradition of the Church and explain how the mysteries of the Rosary reveal Mary as Christ's disciple (proclaims Christ's life, suffering, death; resurrection and ascension of Jesus; unfold Mary's virtues, her assumption and coronation in heaven). [CCC nos. 963-970]

BL3.1: Identify in the Scriptures and in Church teaching the mission of the Church (e.g. spreading the Good News to all people of the world through action, word and deed and to unite them with Christ, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." – Mt. 28:19-20; cf. Mk. 16:15-16). [CCC nos. 535-570]

BL3.2: Give examples of how the Church, like a sacrament makes Christ present through its witness (e.g. service to those in need; outreach programs to the young, elderly, sick and

poor; celebrations of prayer and times of retreat, Catholic school religion classes, parish sacramental preparation programs, etc.). [CCC nos. 758-780]

BL3.3: Identify the responsibilities a person takes on when they agree to participate in a mission (i.e. to receive a role to fulfill, to be sent to do a task, to be of service, to sacrifice, to assist others) and compare this to the responsibility of accepting to participate in the mission of Christ in the world under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (i.e. to announce the Gospel – Jesus Christ, to teach, to baptize, to heal, to offer forgiveness, to serve the sick and poor, to make Christ present). [CCC nos. 717-747]

# Grade 3: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- The other sacraments point to the Eucharist as their purpose or end. Baptism enables us to receive the Eucharist; Confirmation perfects the Christian so that his faith in the Eucharist may remain strong; Penance and Anointing of the Sick cleanse the soul from weakness and sin and prepare it for the reception of the Eucharist; Holy Orders ordains the priests necessary to consecrate and offer the Eucharist; and Matrimony is the earthly sign of the purpose of the Eucharist, to unite the faithful with Christ in selfless love.
- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- Through the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), the baptized become members of the Body of Christ. They are strengthened in their witness of Christ, in forming the community of the Church and in the participation of its mission in the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- At the Passover meal of the Last Supper, Jesus instituted the Mass and commanded, “Do this in remembrance of me.”
- In the narrative of the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration and resurrection, the Holy Spirit makes us aware of the presence and divinity of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ; the Pentecost narrative reveals the active presence of the Spirit – God’s gift of divine grace to the Church.
- Holy Spirit strengthens the Church in faith to realize the real presence of God in the bread and wine of the Eucharist and awakens in its members the desire to act justly and to offer prayers of thanksgiving and praise to God our Father for the gift of salvation.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church’s Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Liturgical Year of the Church celebrates God’s plan of salvation revealed in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus i.e. Paschal Mystery recorded in Scripture.
- The Liturgical seasons are marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours which have developed throughout the Tradition of the Church and which

have become part of our experience of faith in Christ as expressed in the yearly life of the Church.

- The Church sets aside special days to celebrate the memory of Mary the Mother of God and the Saints who have witnessed in their lives to the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

### ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: all sacraments point to the Eucharist

Understand that the Church celebrates sacraments which transform our lives, strengthen us and initiate us into the community of the Church; all sacraments point to the Eucharist as their purpose and end. [CCC nos. 1113-1134; 1322-1344]

CL2: Understand that in the celebration of the Eucharist, Christ is present by the power of His word and Spirit and our belief in faith. [CCC nos. 1337-1344; 1373-1381]

CL3: Understand that the Church has established special days and seasons to celebrate the life of Christ and the mystery of his presence (i.e. Lord's Day, liturgical seasons, feasts, and memorials with a focus on Advent and Christmas). [CCC nos. 1091-1112; 1163-1171; 1204-1209]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Define the meaning of "divine and actual Grace" and find within a selection of biblical passages, examples of God's presence and the gift of His grace transforming human experience into sacred experience. (Creation Story, Exodus event, the Birth of Jesus and His baptism, the Resurrection of Jesus, Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit.) [CCC nos. 1113-1134]

CL1.2: Through an examination of the actions, symbols, and prayers of the Seven Sacraments of the Church, identify and explain how the sacraments celebrate initiation and belonging to the community of the Church (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation), healing sickness and forgiveness of sin (Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick), renewal and conversion (Baptism, Reconciliation), service (Matrimony, Holy Orders) and how they are all linked to and expressed in the Eucharist. [CCC nos. 1322-1344]

CL1.3: Link special moments in human life to the sacraments (e.g. birth of a child – Baptism; growing in maturity and responsibility – Confirmation; the need for forgiveness – Reconciliation; the experience of sickness – Anointing of the Sick; decisions of commitment – Marriage and Holy Orders) and suggest other times in our ordinary daily life when awareness of God's presence makes them both spiritual and significant (e.g. experience of nature i.e. watching a sunrise; special achievements i.e. artistic and sports endeavour; once in a life-time events which are not repeated i.e. the first day of school).

CL2.1: Connect Christ's words and actions in the Gospel narratives of the Last Supper with the Paschal Mystery (Christ's death and resurrection) and with the symbols, rituals and prayers in the celebration of the liturgy of the Mass. [CCC nos. 1329; 1337-1344]

CL2.2: Describe the ways in which the Church confirms its belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist (i.e. through rituals of prayer, adoration, and by giving it a special place to reside in the Church – the Tabernacle). [CCC nos. 1377-1381]

CL2.3: Through an examination of selected Scripture passages, identify the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ and in the early Church and explain how this role is repeated in the liturgy of the Mass in the Church today. [CCC nos. 1373-1381]

CL3.1: Describe the origin of the Liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas by connecting the images related to each season to their roots in Scripture (i.e. Advent – Jesse Tree, Christmas – Nativity Sets with the biblical narrative of Isaiah 11:1 and Lk. 1-2). [CCC nos. 1159-1162; 1168-1171; 1204-1209]

CL3.2: Explain how and why particular days, various seasons and feast/saints days throughout the Liturgical Year of the Church are celebrated (i.e. Sunday/the Lord's day – celebration of the Eucharist, activities such as Sabbath rest, leisure and recreation; Advent and Christmas – colours, images, rituals and cultural practices which express faith; Feast days – All Saints Day, Easter Vigil with the Litany of Saints). [CCC nos. 956; 1163-1173]

CL3.3: Compare the way we celebrate special occasions and milestones to remember important personal and family history that has served to form who we become, to ways the Christians celebrate the life of Jesus Christ in the Church's Liturgical Year. [CCC nos. 1099-1103; 1163-1173]

# Grade 3: Living a Moral Life

## **Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus summed up the Ten Commandments into two, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbour as yourself.” (Matt. 22:37-40)
- The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and the Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

### **Big Ideas:**

- God has created human persons with free will and reason (the ability to choose to do what is good or what is not good).
- All human actions have consequences for which we are responsible and that should be considered when making a moral decision.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

### **Big Ideas:**

- Sin is any act which goes against the will of God and destroys or weakens charity in the hearts of human persons.
- “*Mortal sin* destroys charity in the heart of human persons through a grave violation of God’s law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him.” [CCC no.1855]
- A venial sin is an act of disobedience that, in a lesser way than mortal sin, does not observe the moral law or one that disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without the knowledge and consent of the one acting; it weakens our relationship with God but does not remove God’s Grace from our lives. [CCC nos. 1855-1863]
- Sin can only be overcome by first acknowledging our need and asking for God’s forgiveness, accepting God’s grace and living in the Holy Spirit.

## ***Overall Expectations***

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of how God teaches us to be good and to reflect this goodness in our actions (i.e. Moral Law – revealed in Scripture e.g. Old Law – Ten Commandments, New Law – Law of the Gospel). [CCC nos. 1949-1986; 2052-2082]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of the gift of freedom and responsibility that we have in the choices that we make in trying to live a good Christian moral life. [CCC nos. 1730-1748]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of sin and our human capacity to choose to commit actions which do not show love for God or neighbour (i.e. personal sin, and social sin). [CCC nos. 1846-1876]

### ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Retell Gospel narratives that demonstrate the importance of fulfilling God's law of love, i.e. Love of God and Love of Neighbour, (e.g. Lk. 18:18-23 – the rich young man; Matt. 22:34-40 – the Pharisees asking Jesus about the greatest commandment) and explain the importance of obedience to this law in striving to live a moral life and in seeking eternal life. [CCC nos. 1965-1974; 1961-1964; 2052-2082]

ML1.2: Identify through the Old Testament passages (Ex. 20:2-17; Deut 5:6-21) how God reveals the Ten Commandments, and in the New Testament gospels the two commandments that Jesus gave as a summary of the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue. [CCC nos. 1961-1964]

ML1.3: Explain how receiving and following instructions demonstrates our need for help and benefits us (i.e. brings us happiness, helps us to be good, etc.) and use examples to illustrate how obeying the Ten Commandments strengthens our relationship with God (i.e. Commandments 1-3) and with others (i.e. Commandments 4-10). [CCC nos. 1949-1964; 2052-2082]

ML2.1: Through an examination of various biblical narratives, identify how the protagonist misused the gift of freedom and the consequences of their action (e.g. Adam and Eve, Moses striking the rock twice, David, Jonah, and the disciples who stopped following Jesus after the prediction of his death). [CCC nos. 1739-1748]

ML2.2: Identify those things in our life which can threaten or weaken our human freedom (i.e. sin, fear, bad habits, being controlled by negative passions, etc.), and describe ways that we can strengthen our human freedom as a force of growth and maturity in our lives. [CCC nos. 1730-1748]

ML2.3: Identify and illustrate what it means to have freedom (i.e. a power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act) and why this is an important human gift received from God which requires us to be responsible in its use.

ML2.4: Outline the consequences of choosing between good and evil using a variety of strategies (drama, case studies and scenarios). [CCC nos. 1730-1738]

ML3.1: Define the meaning of “sin”, differentiate between venial and mortal sins and provide examples of both taken from the experience of their everyday lives. [CCC nos. 1846-1876].

ML3.2: Define the difference between personal (a wrongful act committed by only one person who thus bears full responsibility for the consequences) and social sin (a wrongful act committed with others who share the responsibility for its consequences, e.g. group bullying, destruction of property) and explain why both weaken our relationship with God and others. [CCC nos. 1846-1876]

ML3.3: Examine a selection of scripture passages that demonstrate both personal and social sin and the consequences for the protagonist and those offended (e.g. the fall of Adam and Eve; Peter denies Jesus; Judas’ betrayal of Jesus). [CCC nos. 1846-1876]

ML3.4: Describe what the Church teaches about God’s mercy and what we must do to rebuild our relationship with God and those we have offended. [CCC nos. 1846-1848]

# Grade 3: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- The Spirit gathers the Church as one in Christ and forms it for mission through the sacraments, guides us in our spiritual and moral life, is always and forever with the Church. (LC1.2)
- The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Body of Christ; the Spirit dwells in each person and thus in the Church; through the Spirit, Christ dwells in the Church.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Holy Spirit, active and living in the Church is the source of its life, of its unity in diversity, and of the riches of its gifts and charisms. [CCC nos. 731-747]
- At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit poured out many gifts upon those who were gathered and through the sacraments of the Church, continues this same work providing us with the gifts and talents we need to build the reign of God here on earth. [CCC nos. 731-747]

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Demonstrate an understanding of the community of the Church as the temple of the Holy Spirit. [CCC nos. 683-701; 797-810; 731-747]

LC2: Understand the importance of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit in the Church's life i.e. communion in spiritual goods. [CCC nos. 949-953]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: From a selection of biblical passages, identify how the Holy Spirit came upon the Church (Pentecost) and what it means to say the Church is the 'Temple of the Holy Spirit' (e.g. the Spirit dwells in each of us – 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Christ has gathered the Church as one body in which He dwells by the Spirit – Ephesians 2:19-22; [CCC no. 809]; "The Spirit is the soul... of the Mystical Body, the source of its life, of its unity in diversity, and of the riches of its gifts and charisms."). [CCC nos. 731-747]

LC1.2: Connect some of the names, titles, and symbols of the Holy Spirit found in Scripture and Tradition, to the Spirit’s participation in the life and mission of the Church as the “temple of the Holy Spirit”. [CCC nos. 683-701]

LC1.3: Compare the Catholic understanding of the dual nature of the person (i.e. body and soul) with the Catholic belief in the Holy Spirit as the “soul of the Church,” and link this to the need to constantly keep our bodies free from sin. [CCC nos. 797-810]

LC2.1: Describe how the Holy Spirit at Pentecost inspired the disciples of Jesus to become a community (i.e. visible and invisible) and the mission he gave to them (to witness to Jesus in their words and actions; to live holy and just lives). [CCC nos. 731-747]

LC2.2: Identify how the Holy Spirit keeps the presence of Jesus alive in the Church through those who work for unity, justice and peace (e.g. disciples, saints, missionaries, advocates for justice). [CCC nos. 820-822; 849-856]

LC2.3: Describe the God-given gifts manifested by the Holy Spirit in the early Church (i.e. a communion of spiritual goods; i.e. communion in faith, prayer, charisms and charity), and how each contributes to the building up of the Church to be a living witness to the risen Lord. [CCC nos. 949-953]

# Grade 3: Living in Solidarity

## **Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

### **Big Ideas:**

- The disciples were united by the Spirit in one mission and given the ability to witness to Christ; those to whom they witness were gathered by the Spirit through the recounting of Christ's life. (Spirit gives us different gifts – we need each other to be one whole and healthy community.) [CCC nos. 731-747]
- United with Christ as one body, we are formed and nourished by Christ Jesus in preparation for our participation in his mission.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Sacred Scripture reveals the transcendent dignity of the human person, their equality and differences and the desire of God for human solidarity (i.e. justice, peace and harmony within the human community).
- Catholic Social Teaching is founded on the principle of human dignity; human dignity stems from God and is of God because we are made in God's own image and likeness.
- The two great commandments, love of God and love of neighbour, call us to promote this dignity and equality, to respect differences and to foster solidarity (i.e. material and spiritual friendship) with one another.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Understand that the Holy Spirit assists us to develop and strengthen our relationship with Jesus and one another through our participation in society (i.e. human community / Body of Christ). [CCC nos. 731-747; 1905-1912]

LS2: Focus: Human dignity

Understand that God created all persons in his one image; equal in their human dignity yet diverse in their being (i.e. male and female, weak and strong, diversity of race, colour, creed, charisms, talents) and this equality and diversity is to be respected. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1934-1938]

## *Specific Expectations*

LS1.1: Retell the New Testament account of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-42) to demonstrate an understanding of the unity the Holy Spirit brought about among those gathered by the Spirit and baptized by fire, and those to whom they witnessed. [CCC nos. 731-747]

LS1.2: Link the concept of Christian community inspired by the Holy Spirit (communion with God and one another) with the need to be truthful, to act justly, and to be motivated by love in our relationships with others; and describe the characteristics of a school or family that modeled Christian communion (e.g. respect, promotion of human dignity, acceptance among members, food, drink, and safe home available for all, a way to participate in work, opportunity for education). [CCC nos. 1905-1912]

LS1.3: Through an examination of particular scripture passages (e.g. 1 Cor. 12 – one body, many parts, John 15:1-17 – vine and branches), identify the nature of the Church’s unity and how the Holy Spirit promotes unity in the Church, i.e. the Body of Christ, and describe through example, ways we can use the gifts the Spirit has given us to serve others (to promote the Common Good). [CCC nos. 1905-1912]

LS2.1: Reflect on Genesis 1-3 in the Hebrew Scriptures and identify why the creation of human beings is unique (i.e. we are made in God’s image, we are created to be in relationship with God and others, when we commit sin it breaks these important relationships). [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Find evidence within our human relationships (friendships, families, marriage, and society, etc.) that God has created us as social beings and explain how the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation maintain and strengthen these relationships with God and others. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Describe ways that all human beings are equal (i.e. personal human dignity) and also are created with differences (i.e. male and female, race, ethnicity, etc.) and identify ways that we can demonstrate our appreciation and respect for this diversity (e.g. inclusion of all, sharing what we have with the less fortunate, caring for the sick and elderly, asking questions about a person’s unique characteristics with respect, respecting ideas and beliefs that are different from our own). [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

# Grade 3: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Many of the forms of prayer passed on through the Tradition are found in the prayer life of Mary, blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise.
- Jesus turned to his Father through prayers of praise and petition during his life and is the perfect model of a life of prayer.
- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God through his example (i.e. seeking solitude, humility and confidence, praying from the heart) and by teaching them the Lord's Prayer (the Our Father).
- A life of prayer reflects a covenant relationship with God as revealed in Scripture i.e. Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah who model this dimension prayer.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer:* Forms and Expressions of Prayer

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through a living transmission (Sacred Tradition) within the believing and praying Church, the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God to Pray. (Common and liturgical prayers of the Church.)
- Within the Tradition of Catholic Church, sacred space is used to point us to Christ Jesus, the object of our prayers. Through symbols, sacramentals, images, architecture and silence we are drawn to Christ and through prayer communicate with God.

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand how the universal call to prayer from God is revealed in scripture in the Old Testament and the New Testament. [CCC nos. 2562-2564; 2566-2597]

PR2: Understand that the Church teaches and provides us with guidance as we learn how to pray. [CCC nos. 2623-2625; 2683-2696]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Through an examination of a selection of gospel passages, identify the unique prayer life of the Virgin Mary (i.e. Fiat, Magnificat, her intercession at Cana), connect each of her prayers to one of the forms of prayer promoted with the Church (blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise) and explain how each prayer reveals about prayer in God's plan of salvation. [CCC nos. 2617-2619; 2622; 2673-2679]

PR1.2: Examine a selected Gospel passages to unfold what Jesus taught us about how we are to pray to the Father and link this to how he continues to teach us through the common prayers and liturgies of the Church, i.e. Eucharist, the Lord's Prayer. [CCC nos. 2958-2616; 2620-21]

PR1.3: Reflect on a selection of Old Testament passages which reveal prayer as a response to God's covenantal promise and link these forms of prayer to the forms of prayer promoted by the Church. (Gen. 12:14, 15:2 – Abraham prays through his obedience and in word; Numbers 14 – Moses' great intercessory prayer; Book of Psalms – David's hymns of praise; 1 Kings 19:9-14 – God speaks to Elijah. [CCC nos. 2566-2598]

PR2.1: Use a variety of strategies (art, symbols, drama and gestures, planning and participation in communal prayer, etc.) to express the importance of sacred space for prayer and liturgy (shrine, places of pilgrimage, monasteries, prayer centre in school or home and especially the church which is the privileged place for the celebration liturgy and Eucharist); and the meaning of some of the traditional and liturgical prayers of the Church (e.g. Hail Mary; the Our Father; the Prayer of St. Francis; the Act of Contrition; Glory Be; Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Lamb of God; Apostle's Creed). [CCC nos. 2683-2696]

PR2.2: Present examples of the many people (*saints, family, teachers, priests and religious*) who help guide us as we learn to pray the traditional and liturgical prayers of the Church (e.g. Hail Mary; the Our Father; the Prayer of St. Francis; the Act of Contrition; Glory Be; Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Lamb of God; Apostle's Creed). [CCC nos. 2683-2690]

PR2.3: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the Holy Spirit in guiding us as we learn how to pray as Jesus taught us. [CCC nos. 2623-2625; 2670-2672]

# Hope Expectations: Junior

*By the end of grade 6, it is our hope that students will be individuals who:*

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Believing</b></p>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reflect on the saving story of our Christian faith and how we are to respond to God’s gift of salvation;</li> <li>❖ Cherish the Hebrew and Christian scriptures as an encounter with God, and Christ Jesus as the living Word of God at the heart of the gospels;</li> <li>❖ Actively seek to find the face of God in Scripture, in God’s creation, particularly in the <i>face of the other</i>;</li> <li>❖ Proclaim with confidence a belief in the mysteries of the Catholic faith, the Creed.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Celebrating</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cherish and participate in the sacramental life of the Church as the gift of God’s presence in our lives to nourish, restore, guide and form us as children of God;</li> <li>❖ Honour and respect the sacred bread and wine of the Eucharist as the Body and Blood of Christ;</li> <li>❖ Seek to understand the multi-fold meaning of the biblical narratives, symbols and ritual actions associated with the five seasons of the Liturgical year.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Living a Moral Life</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Seek to grow in their understanding of the depth and breadth of the Decalogue and the moral teachings of Jesus;</li> <li>❖ Apply Catholic moral teaching to moral decisions they face in their own lives;</li> <li>❖ Acknowledge their own human weakness and reflect on their sins as the first step in seeking forgiveness and God’s grace for their ongoing conversion;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate Catholic moral teaching as a valid, authoritative interpretation of scripture that addresses contemporary moral issues to guide moral decision-making.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Living in Communion</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognize Jesus as a companion and friend who travels with them on the journey of their lives;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ and accept the responsibility of this gift;</li> <li>❖ Participate as an active member in the prayer life of the Communion of Saints to help those saints among us and those who have gone before us and who are in need of our prayers;</li> <li>❖ Recognize and believe in Mary as the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church.</li> </ul>  |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>Living in Solidarity</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Actively seek to identify the purpose of their lives and the vocation to which God is calling them;</li> <li>❖ Develop attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and act to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good;</li> <li>❖ Strive to integrate faith with all arenas of their life: personal, social, academic, etc.;</li> <li>❖ Respect the faith traditions, world religions and the life journeys of all people of good will.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Praying</b></p>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Seek intimacy with God and celebrate communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the gift of the common prayers of the Church and how they teach us to pray;</li> <li>❖ Incorporate Sacred Scripture into their prayer life as a reflective form of prayer that reveals the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</li> </ul>   |

# Grade 4: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Magisterium of the Church (teaching authority of the Church; the bishops in union with the Pope), guided by the Holy Spirit are responsible for the authoritative interpretation of Sacred Scripture and Tradition. [CCC no. 100, 137]
- The Church accepts and venerates Sacred Scriptures (Old and New Testament) because they are inspired by God and therefore truly the Word of God.
- The four gospels occupy a central place because they are the Word of God revealed in Christ Jesus who is their centre. [CCC nos. 135-136]
- The ongoing Tradition of the Church's teaching, inspired by the Holy Spirit, continues to unfold human understanding of the fullness of God's self-revelation. [CCC nos. 94-95]

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- In the articles of the Creed, we profess our faith in mysteries – doctrines that could never be known apart from divine revelation.
- The Creed is an authoritative summary of the central beliefs of the Christian faith (e.g. Trinity, Incarnation, the Virgin Mary, Communion of Saints, forgiveness of sin, resurrection, final judgement and eternal life).

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is One in its profession of faith (i.e. Creed), in its common celebration of worship (i.e. Sacraments) and united in its teaching through apostolic succession (i.e. Pope and Bishops – Magisterium).

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of the Transmission of Divine Revelation in history (i.e. Sacred Scripture and Tradition) and why the Gospels hold a special place in the Church. [CCC nos. 74-141]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of “the resurrection of the Body and life everlasting” professed in the Apostle's Creed and revealed by Christ Jesus.

BL3: Explain how the Church is called in its mission to witness to the “sacred mystery of unity” (i.e. the Church is called to be One). [CCC nos. 731-747; 811-822]

### ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Describe the Canon of the Catholic Bible as two distinct yet related Testaments (Old/Hebrew and New) consisting of 73 books and identify the various forms of literature found in the Bible (e.g. narratives, wisdom sayings, psalms-prayers, moral teachings, parables, the life and ministry of Jesus - Gospels) and explain how the literary form influences how we read and interpret scripture. [CCC nos. 74-141]

BL1.2: Define and explain the significance of the Christian beliefs that “God is the author of Sacred Scripture”, Jesus is the “Unique Word of Sacred Scripture” and that the Holy Spirit is the “Interpreter of Sacred Scripture”. [CCC nos. 74-141]

BL1.3: Identify and describe using examples, the central teaching role of the Magisterium (i.e. Pope and College of Bishops) and the role of Bible in the life of the Church, Christian families and Catholic school communities (e.g. Liturgy of the Word within the Mass – proclamation of readings and the Gospel, signs of reverence toward the Bible, personal prayer and reflection in reading the Bible, and its use in the teaching of religion about the nature of God, Jesus Christ and Christian living). [CCC nos. 74-141]

BL2.1: Examine a selection of scripture passages to unfold the promise of eternal life (John 11:25, 26; John 10:27, 28; John 6:27; John 5:24; John 3:16; Romans 6:23) and the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven (parables - Matt. 13; 18:23-35; 22:2-14; 25:1-13).

BL2.2: Summarize what the Church teaches about the three states of life that exist after death: Heaven, Purgatory and Hell.

BL2.3: Connect the Church’s belief in the resurrection of the Body and life everlasting to belief in the Communion of Saints and the practice of praying to and for those who have died.

BL3.1: Using a selection of passages from the New Testament, identify signs of unity within the early Church (Col. 3:12; John 17:11) and give examples of how these are present in different forms in the Church today. [CCC nos. 731-747]

BL3.2: Describe the many ways that the Catholic and Christian Churches work to respond to the gift of unity Christ gave to the Church and to promote unity as a reality in the face of signs of disunity (ecumenical councils, working together for justice and peace, annual world day of prayer). [CCC nos. 817-822]

BL3.3: Through an examination of Sacred Scripture (e.g. Eph. 4:3-5; 1 Cor. 10:17; John 10:16) and Church teaching explain why the Church professes to be “One”. (As Catholics, we profess one Creed, are guided by the same teachings, celebrate the same sacraments, participate in the one hierarchical structure based on the apostolic succession, are formed

as one Body in Christ and given life by the Holy Spirit for the sake of one hope.) [CCC nos. 811-816; 866]

# Grade 4: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Sacraments of the Church have their roots in Scripture i.e. the ministry which Christ handed on to the Church through the apostles.
- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Sacraments of Eucharist and of Reconciliation provide the Grace of God's mercy and forgiveness and strengthen us to live a new life in Christ.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- In the celebration of the Mass, Christ's presence is manifest in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist, in the actions of breaking and drinking, and in the Words of the Consecration, "This is my Body ... This is the chalice of my Blood..."
- In the celebrations of the Mass we offer our lives to God through the symbols, words and ritual actions of the offertory; in the consecrated bread and wine of the Holy Eucharist, the Holy Spirit pours into us the gift of Grace through the ongoing gift of His only Son, Christ Jesus.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Liturgical Year of the Church celebrates God's plan of salvation revealed in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus i.e. Paschal Mystery.
- The Liturgical seasons are marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours which have developed throughout the Tradition of the Church and which have become part of our experience of faith in Christ as expressed in the yearly life of the Church.
- The Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ and give grace through themselves when we are open to receiving it; sacramentals (i.e. blessing, ritual actions, signs, symbols, holy objects and images) were instituted by the Church and arouse in us a pious disposition, by means of which we may obtain Grace.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Reconciliation

Understand that through the actions of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the priest, the sacraments can heal relationships and restore us to new life. [CCC nos. 1420-1498]

CL2: Understand that the celebration of the Eucharist allows us to receive gifts from God (grace) to transform our lives (fruits). [CCC nos. 1391-1405]

CL3: Understand how the Church creates sacred space for the celebration of the sacraments and uses symbols, rituals, words, to reveal the action of Christ in our lives (Paschal Mystery). [CCC nos. 1179-1186; 1113-1130; 1167-1179]

## ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Connect gospel narratives of forgiveness (Mk. 2:1-12; Luke 15:11-32) and the institution of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (John 20:22-23) to the role of the priest within the sacrament.

CL1.2: Identify in the Rite of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation - who can receive and celebrate the sacrament, the rituals, blessings and prayers, signs and symbols, that signify and convey the grace and identification with Christ who forgives through the Church; and the effects of the sacrament. [CCC nos. 1440-1513; 1480-1498]

CL1.3: Link the Sacraments of Initiation and Reconciliation to the seasons of the liturgical calendar (Advent, Lent, and Easter) and identify in the symbols of the sacraments and the seasons, signs of God's presence (e.g. "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.>"). [CCC nos. 1420-1470]

CL1.4: Demonstrate the different ways reconciliation and healing are experienced within the Christian community (i.e. in the Mass/Eucharist, through the sacrament of Reconciliation, in charitable, compassionate, forgiving relationships among its members and with others) and explain how this practice in our daily lives sanctifies, transforms and sustains relationships while revealing God's love within Christian families and communities and the world. [CCC nos. 1430-1439]

CL2.1: Identify the gifts received through participation in the Eucharist (i.e. offertory, communion); connect them with the various symbols, rituals, and sacramental signs found in the liturgy of the Mass; and explain how they help us to recognize the presence of Christ. [CCC nos. 1391-1405]

CL2.2: Identify through the passages of Scripture the gifts received by those who came to recognize the presence of Christ and who sought out an encounter with Him (e.g. Exodus 3:1-22; Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 24:13-35).

CL2.3: Identify certain gifts coming from God which, when we experience them in our lives, transform us and those who are in relationship with us (wonders of nature, the beauty of the arts, the laughter of a baby, the love of a parent or guardian).

CL3.1: Examine scripture passages of the Old Testament and New Testament which are proclaimed during specific Liturgical seasons i.e. Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and communicate what they reveal about and celebrate in Jesus' life. [CCC nos. 1168-1173]

CL3.2: Identify within the church, sacred space that is dedicated to the celebration of the sacraments (e.g. sanctuary, tabernacle, pulpit/ambo, sacristy, high altar, side altars, baptistery, confessional, stations of the cross, choir loft) and explain how they are connected to the signs/symbols used for the celebration, the sacred images of our faith, the sacramentals, and used in the celebration of the Liturgical seasons. [CCC nos. 1159-1171; 1179-1186; 1667-1679]

CL3.3: Distinguish between 'sacramentals' and 'sacraments' and use symbols, words, gesture, prayer and music as sacramentals in the creation of a sacred space and ritual celebrations that focus on the seasons of the liturgical year. [CCC nos. 1167-1179; 1168-1171]

# Grade 4: Living a Moral Life

## **Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and Church Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through our conscience we discover God’s truth for our lives and are invited to follow (i.e. listen) to the “voice of God” (i.e. His will) in our lives.
- Conscience is a judgement of reason concerning the moral choices we face and the actions we perform.
- We have a moral responsibility to form our conscience in accordance with Truth i.e. Jesus Christ, Word of God, Moral Law and the natural law which God has written on our hearts.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

### **Big Ideas:**

- God’s merciful forgiveness is manifested in the words and actions of Christ Jesus.
- We are called to engage in a journey of interior transformation as Christians, to grow in holiness of life, and to express this in a life of charity and perfection.
- Sin can only be overcome by first acknowledging our need and asking for God’s forgiveness, accepting God’s grace and living in the Holy Spirit.

## ***Overall Expectations***

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the Ten Commandments (i.e. Decalogue, Old Law) for living the Christian moral life. [CCC nos. 2052-2082; 2083-2195; 2196-2557]

ML2: Explain how we are called, through the help of our consciences, to discover God’s truth and obey God’s will. [CCC nos. 1776-1802]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding that God is merciful (i.e. forgives sin) and offers us reconciliation through the Church and specifically the sacraments (i.e. sacraments of penance, healing, and Eucharist). [CCC nos. 1420-1498]

## *Specific Expectations*

ML1.1: Describe how the Ten Commandments have been used by the Church for the preparation of the sacraments (i.e. examination of one's life, reception of Baptism, Reconciliation, Sacrament of the Sick) and moral instruction and teaching. [CCC nos. 2064-2073]

ML1.2: Identify in the Old and New Testaments the experiences of the people when they did not follow the Ten Commandments (e.g. Chosen People – Moses, King David, Solomon, Jonah) and describe God's call to conversion, his ultimate response of mercy and forgiveness. [CCC nos. 2056, 1805, 1807, 2411]

ML1.3: Identify efforts being made by your family, school community and Church to live according to the Ten Commandments (i.e. Decalogue as a path of life). [CCC nos. 2052-2082]

ML2.1: Identify and interpret biblical passages that reveal the indwelling of God's law in our conscience and the stance holy people take before God's laws. (See: Psalm 19:7-11; Rom. 8:7; 2 Cor. 3:3; Hebrew 8:10; Rom. 3:20; Rom. 7:22, 8:2; Phil. 2:12-13)

ML2.2: Explain why in preparation for the sacrament of reconciliation we are to first examine our conscience in light of this Moral Law. [CCC nos. 2055, 1972, 1983, 1985; 1776-1802]

ML2.3: Describe the Church's understanding of the "judgement of conscience" and how it helps us to recognize the moral quality of our actions (i.e. before we are going to perform them, after we have performed them, and in the process of performing them). [CCC nos. 1777-1782]

ML2.4: Identify times when we might hear God speaking to us; giving us instructions (moral truth) to help us "do what is good and avoid what is evil"; and link this to the work of our conscience through which God/the Holy Spirit inspires us to do the good. [CCC nos. 1776-1788]

ML3.1: Through an examination of a selection of scripture passages, provide examples of how God's mercy is shown to sinners and how the sinners respond (i.e. parables – the Prodigal Son, miracles, paschal mystery – Christ offered for our sins; the new covenant). [CCC nos. 1846-1848]

ML3.2: Describe a Catholic understanding of how the Eucharistic celebration promotes forgiveness and reconciliation in the communal Christian life of the Church and the school. [CCC nos. 1391-1401]

ML3.3: Explain the process of conversion and repentance that is essential in the experience and celebration of the sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation. [CCC nos. 1425-1460]

# Grade 4: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church is a mystery (Mystery of the Church) because it is both human and divine; visible and spiritual, the union of God and persons; the mystical Body of Christ.
- Through the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) we are united to Christ and one another in a living faith community that is guided by the Holy Spirit to live holy lives.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Holy Spirit has inspired saints throughout the history of the Church to live lives of holiness and justice.
- Scripture, Church Tradition and the example of the Saints, and the current community of faith are sources of hope that inspire a virtuous life of holiness and justice.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand what it means to profess belief in the “One”, “Holy”, “Catholic” and “Apostolic” Church. [CCC nos. 748-780; 811-831]

LC2: Understand how through the Church we are encouraged to live a life of holiness. [CCC nos. 543-546; 928-929; 2012-2016]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Identify through selected scripture passages (Old and New Testament) the names, images and symbols of the Church which describe its origin, foundation and mission in the plan of God’s salvation (1 Cor. 39; Rom. 11:13-26; Mt. 21:32-43; Isa. 51:7; Jn. 15:1-5; 1 Cor. 3:9; Mt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7; Ps. 118:22; 1 Cor. 3:11; 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:19-22; Rev. 21:3; 1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 21:1-2; Gal. 4:26; Rev. 12:17, 19:7, 21:2, 21:9, 22:17; Eph. 5:25-26, 5:29; Jn. 10:1-10; Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:11-31; Jn. 10:11; 1 Pet. 5:4; Jn. 10:11-16). [CCC nos. 748-769]

LC1.2: Describe how the Church strives to be “one” (i.e. common faith, worship-celebration, and teaching) and identify what the Church continues to do to promote this greater unity with other Christian Churches and Religions (ecumenical dialogue). [CCC nos. 811-822]

LC1.3: Explain how the Church is “mystery” (the Church is both a visible community of faith, hope and charity and a spiritual community – the mystical Body of Christ endowed with heavenly riches, both human and divine; a communion of God and persons and link this mystery to the call to holiness and our response. [CCC nos. 770-776]

LC1.4: Demonstrate an understanding of the sacraments as both a sign and instrument of God’s call to holiness. [CCC nos. 823-829]

LC2.1: Examine the parables of Jesus that deal with sinners and outcasts and explain how they were signs of hope for the followers of Jesus to live a life of holiness. [CCC nos. 543-546]

LC2.2: Identify how in the Church, its practices, celebrations, service and teachings gather and form us for a life of holiness (e.g. action of the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments, the practice of virtue and charity – outreach, the message of hope and the examples of holiness presented in the readings of the Liturgy of the Word and the gift of Grace in the celebration of the Mass). [CCC nos. 152-62; 164-69; 178-88]

LC2.3: Describe the actions of people and/or organizations within the Church who encourage us to live a life of holiness (e.g. prayer groups, Legion of Mary, L’Arche). [CCC nos. 928-929; 2012-2016]

LC2.4: Examine the lives of the saints and explain how they are examples of hope that inspire us to live a holy life.

# Grade 4: Living in Solidarity

## **Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

### **Big Ideas:**

- Legitimate authority must conduct itself in a manner that preserves its institutions and promotes the common good of society as a moral force based on freedom and a sense of responsibility.
- Since all legitimate authority comes from God, it is to be respected and upheld.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Scripture reveals the dignity of the human person, the goodness of all creations and the responsibility of persons and society to protect what God has created and the common good of all.
- The Church's Social Justice Teachings promote the proper development and flourishing of the human person, culture and education, the promotion of the common good, stewardship of creation, democratic societies, and the legitimate exercise of authority through social structures and institutions both at the local and international level.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS3**

Our mission is to evangelize (i.e. proclaim the Gospel message) and to witness to Jesus Christ [CCC nos. 748-870]

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus' life and ministry was universal; it included outreach to believers and non-believers.
- Christ entrusted this mission to the apostles, to the Church, to all baptized Christians, and to people of good will and faith, who believe in God.
- People of various Christian churches, other religious faith traditions share common values with Catholic Christianity: belief in God, Truth, justice, morality, dignity of the human person, a sense of the common good, beauty and culture, stewardship of creation, and a desire to deepen their relationship with God the Creator of all.
- Ecumenism and Inter-Religious Dialogue invites Christians to seek unity, to respect the gift of religious diversity in the search for the Truth and in the articulation of common beliefs, while developing an attitude of respect for religious differences and the openness and desire to seek communion.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Understand that there is a legitimate role and need for the charism of authority to ensure and promote the common good of society and that the Christian witness is a duty of obedience to the just laws (i.e. moral order) which promote the human community. [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS2: Focus: the common good and stewardship of creation  
Demonstrate an understanding of how the gifts received as human beings invite us to be responsible stewards of creation (i.e. natural world created by God) and to bring about His reign in the human community (i.e. common good of societies and nations of the earth). [CCC nos. 325-421; 1877-1927]

LS3: Understand that God wants all people to receive the gift of salvation (i.e. Jesus Christ, the Gospel) and in order to do this we are to respectfully invite other religions to know Jesus. [CCC nos. 748-870; 1213-1284; 2110-2141]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Identify and summarize the message contained in the passages of scripture which involve Jesus explaining his authority in relationship to God his Father (e.g. Mk. 10 – places of honour in the kingdom), the respect of his authority (e.g. Mt. 8 – cure of the centurion’s servant) and the challenge of his authority (e.g. Mt. 15 – interpretation of the Law by the Pharisees). [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS1.2: Define the difference between the exercise of authority (i.e. having a sphere of responsibility for others) and the use of power (i.e. the way and means of enacting one’s authority / responsibility) and explain, using real life examples why it is “preferable that each power be balanced by other powers” or spheres of responsibility (e.g. teacher and parent, teacher and principal, principal and older students - hall monitors; parents and older sibling; referee and coach; legal system - police officer, lawyer, crown prosecutor, judge and court of appeals; Polis - Prime Minister, members of the ruling party and the opposition; Magisterium of the Church and the laity). [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS1.3: Identify those individuals in society who exercise legitimate authority, who work and care for the good of all people and explain why their role is important for the proper functioning of the human community. [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS2.1: Examine a selection of scripture passages to identify the image of the human being and Creation that the scriptures present (Genesis 1-3 – made in God’s image, communal beings; the goodness of the world, the goods of the world for the use of human persons; I Cor. 12:4-13 – through the Holy Spirit, the Christian community has been given many gifts that are to be shared in order build up the Kingdom of God – co-creators with God). [CCC nos. 325-421; 1877-1927]

LS2.2: Articulate the three essential elements which promote the common good (i.e. respect for the fundamental rights of the person; prosperity and the development of the spiritual and temporal goods of society; peace and security of societies and nations) and make connections through examples of how these improve the conditions of human life. [CCC nos. 1877-1927]

LS2.3: Identify and describe ways we are called as human beings to be responsible stewards who protect the environment and promote creation (i.e. natural ecological world in which we live) that has its origins in the creative will and purpose of God. [CCC nos. 1877-1927]

LS3.1: Examine a selection of Scripture passages to identify and describe God's plan for salvation (e.g. Mk. 16:1; Jn. 1:12; Jn. 3:3-8, 16-18; Jn. 17:3; Jn. 14:6; Matt. 10:32-33; James 2:14-26; Rom. 5:8) and to find evidence that the Church's mission is to spread the good news of Christ Jesus to all people (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 4:16-40; Acts 1:8; Jn. 20:21). [CCC nos. 836-848; 1213-1284]

LS3.2: Provide examples of how we can show respect when we encounter people from diverse religious backgrounds (e.g. learn about their beliefs and practices, look for similarities with your own faith but also notice differences, discuss ways you are similar, suspend judgement, treat them as you would like to be treated by someone from a religion other than your own, ask questions in a respectful and polite manner). [CCC nos. 811-822]

LS3.3: Describe how God can help people who do not know Christ to develop a faith in God and Jesus Christ (through signs and other diverse religious practices) and suggest ways Christians can help people of other faiths to come to know Jesus (by openly sharing what we believe, through small acts of charity, through acceptance and friendship, by praying for their conversion to Christ). [CCC nos. 836-848; 2110-2141]

# Grade 4: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus turned to his Father through prayers of praise and petition during his life and is the perfect model of a life of prayer.
- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God through his example (i.e. seeking solitude, humility and confidence, praying from the heart) and by teaching them the Lord's Prayer (the Our Father).

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer:* Forms and Expressions of Prayer

### **Big Ideas:**

- The life of prayer requires the development of habits which reflect the spirit and example of Jesus' life of prayer.
- Prayer has many forms and expressions found in Scripture and Tradition – blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise, vocal, meditative, and contemplative.
- Prayer is structured and spontaneous, individual and communal, and is enriched by a variety of elements that deepen the experience of prayer (silence, symbols, gospel reading, reflection, images, music, etc.).

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand how Jesus prayed to God His Father and how he teaches us to express our prayers to God. [CCC nos. 2607-2616; 2746-2751]

PR2: Understand the witness of Jesus i.e. his life, teaching and ministry, which have influenced the many forms of Christian prayer and also the expressions of prayer in the Liturgy. [CCC nos. 2598-2649]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Identify through examples of scripture how Jesus hears our prayer and in doing so allows us to increase in the virtues of faith, hope and love. (Matt. 6:8, 7:7-11; Ps. 34:156; Ps. 10:17; Isa. 35:5-6, 61:1-2; Jer. 33:3; Ex. 32:11-14; Moses in the desert, Moses and the escape from Egypt.) [CCC nos. 2607-2616]

PR1.2: Examine John's Gospel (i.e. Jn. 17) and identify the meaning of the unique aspects of Jesus' prayer when "his hour" came to go to the Father (i.e. once and for all, unity, a

priestly prayer, fulfills the petition of the Our Father) and where these themes are expressed in the Eucharistic prayer. [CCC nos. 2746-2751]

PR1.3: Identify from the passages of scripture found in the New Testament why Jesus insists on “conversion of heart” as the first step in prayer (i.e. act of contrition, prayers for reconciliation with God and others) and how these are expressed in daily prayers as well as the Liturgy for the Sacrament of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick. [CCC nos. 2607-2615]

PR2.1: Gather evidence from the Gospels of the importance of prayer in the life of Jesus (i.e. example-witness, parables-teaching) and explain what these passages reveal about the elements of personal and communal prayer. (Matt. 6:1-18; Lk. 11:1-13; Matt. 7:7-8; John 15:16, 16:23-24; John 14:13-14; Matt. 6:9-13; Matt. 7:11; Lk. 3:21-22, 9:28, 21:37; Luke 22:39-41; Matt. 26:39-41; Lk. 18:1-7; Lk. 11:5-10) [CCC nos. 2598-2616]

PR2.2: Describe the various forms of prayer used within the Catholic Tradition (blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise) and state how each form used within the Sacraments and the Liturgy serves to deepen our relationship with God. [CCC nos. 2623-2649]

PR2.3: Develop and present using different forms of prayer and some of the common prayers and devotions of the Church, liturgical celebrations that reveal the Mystery of Christ as it unfolds in the seasons of the liturgical year (e.g. Mary – rosary, Sacred Heart, etc.). [CCC nos. 2617-2619; 2673-2679]

# Grade 5: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- God is revealed through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, which is authoritatively interpreted by the Magisterium (teaching authority of the Church; the bishops in union with the Pope). [CCC nos. 84-90; 100, 137]
- Together Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition form one sacred deposit of the Word of God; Sacred Scripture is the word of God written down under the breath of the Holy Spirit; through its Sacred Tradition the Church hands on Sacred Scripture to the successors of the Apostles (i.e. Magisterium) in “full purity” who in turn preserve it faithfully, explain it and make it more widely known (Apostolic succession). [Dei Verbum 9-10]
- The ongoing Tradition of the Church's teaching, inspired by the Holy Spirit, continues to unfold human understanding of the fullness of God's self-revelation. [CCC nos. 94-95]

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Creed is the summary of the central beliefs of the Christian faith which has developed over the history of the early Church and is still professed today.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is Holy because Christ is its Head, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies its life (i.e. grace, sacraments, and people set aside for holy works e.g. saints).

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of the important role of the Church in handing on Divine Revelation. [CCC nos. 74-100; 748-780]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of the historical development of the Creed; its roots in the Old Testament and New Testament, its first formation in the Apostles' Creed of the Early Church (1<sup>st</sup> century CE) and its second expression formulated by the Council of Nicea (325) and Constantinople (381), the Nicene Creed.

BL3: Explain how the Church is called in its mission to witness to holiness (i.e. the Church is called to be Holy). [CCC nos. 823-829; 946-973; 1987-2029]

### ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Through an examination of selected biblical passages, find evidence of the origin of the Church (i.e. its identity and role) in the Old Covenant. (God gathers the People of God – Gen. 12:2, 15:5-6; God forms a priestly kingdom/holy nation – Ex. 19:5-6; Dt. 7:6; Is. 2:2-5; Mic. 4:1-4; the prophesy of a new covenant – Hos. 1; Is. 1:2-4; Jer. 2; Jer. 31:31-34; Is. 55:3.) [CCC nos. 748-780]

BL1.2: Define the distinction between Tradition and Sacred Scripture and explain how the Church Magisterium hands on Divine Revelation received through Sacred Scripture and Tradition. [CCC nos. 74-100]

BL1.3: Describe how the Church fulfills its mission to spread the “Good News” of Christ to the world (e.g. preaching of the Word, celebration of the sacraments, catechesis and religious education, moral and social justice teaching and the witness of service). [CCC nos. 748-780]

BL2.1: Examine a selection of biblical passages to find evidence of the practice of professing one’s faith (i.e. the rule of faith) and to unfold why it was important for the early Church to profess the mysteries of our faith; e.g. to promote conversion in others. (I Cor. 15:3-6; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:29-37, 41-42)

BL2.2: Compare the professions of faith found in the Apostles’ Creed to those of the Nicene Creed to identify Catholic beliefs that are professed in only one of the two Creeds.

BL2.3: Compare the vows taken at special moments in life (marriage, before testifying in court) to the way we profess the Creed in the Sacrament of Baptism and the Liturgy of Easter Vigil (“Do you believe” – “I do”), and explain why the Creed marks the moment of conversion for those who become members of the Catholic Church.

BL3.1: Examine the Parable of the Rich Young Man to identify what it means to strive for a life of holiness (God is the source of holiness; to strive for holiness we are to obey the commandments, follow Jesus Christ and live a life of justice and charity toward God and neighbour. [CCC nos. 823-829; 2012-2029]

BL3.2: Use examples to explain why “charity is the soul of holiness” within the Church and how the sacraments received through the Church promote God’s grace which helps to sanctify the Church (i.e. Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation and Eucharist allow her to strive for holiness). [CCC nos. 823-829; 1987-2011]

BL3.3: Explain how the devotion to Mary and the canonization of the faithful (i.e. Saints) promotes holiness within the life of the Church (i.e. prayer, devotion, charity) and the witness to justice in our society through the charitable efforts of the local church

community to address poverty, loneliness and spiritual hunger. [CCC nos. 823-829; 946-973]

# Grade 5: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Sacraments of the Church have their roots in Scripture i.e. the ministry which Christ handed on to the Church through the apostles.
- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- The Sacraments of Healing (Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick) through the work of the Holy Spirit provide the Grace of God's mercy and forgiveness and spiritually strengthens our faith in times of sickness reuniting us with God and others when we have sinned.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Mass we encounter His presence in Word i.e. Scripture proclaimed; in the assembled community i.e. Church - Body of Christ; in the priest i.e. Head and Shepherd; and under the sign of bread and wine i.e. sacramental presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.
- The Mass is a communion, a Breaking of Bread, a sacred meal in which we are nourished and become the presence of Christ in our world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church celebrates the Liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time to coincide with the Paschal Mystery of Christ's life.
- The Liturgical seasons are marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours which have developed throughout the Tradition of the Church and which have become part of our experience of faith in Christ as expressed in the yearly life of the Church.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Sacrament of the Sick

Understand that the sacraments can heal relationships and restore us to life through the actions of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the priest. [CCC nos. 1499-1532]

CL2: Understand how the liturgy of the Mass is a celebration of our faith, a belief in the real presence of Christ and our unity in Christ. [CCC nos. 1348-1355; 1373-1381]

CL3: Understand that the Liturgical year celebrates both the mysteries of Christ's life and memorial celebrations for the saints who are examples to us of Christ. [CCC nos. 1145-1178]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Identify and explain the significance of the Last Sacrament (i.e. Penance, Anointing of the Sick and Eucharist) in the Christian life (conveying God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, it brings spiritual and physical strength during an illness, especially at the time of death). [CCC nos. 1524-1532]

CL1.2: Identify in the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick - who can receive and celebrate the sacrament; the rituals, blessings and prayers, signs and symbols that signify and convey grace and identification with Christ who suffers and who heals. [CCC nos. 1514-1523]

CL1.3: Identify in Scripture, examples of illness in human life and the transformation, forgiveness, and healing that Christ reveals through his ministry and connect these examples to the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. [CCC nos. 1449-1513]

CL2.1: Compare the various scripture passages found in the Gospels which unite Christ's presence to the Eucharist and which also serve to strengthen our faith in this mystery (Mt. 26:26-30; Mk. 6:30-44; Jn. 2:1-12; Jn. 6:22-59; Jn. 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 11:23). [CCC nos. 1348-1355]

CL2.2: Identify the elements of the liturgy of Mass that make Christ's presence visible through signs, words and the action of the Holy Spirit (The Assembly, the Liturgy of the Word, the Eucharistic Prayer, the Priesthood). [CCC nos. 1348-1355]

CL2.3: Explain how the prayers, ritual actions, and songs in the liturgy of the Mass can unite us in full, conscious and active participation and transform us into a community called to witness to the presence of Christ in the world. [CCC nos. 1391-1405]

CL3.1: Identify and examine a selection of the scripture passages in the New Testament which reveal the divinity of Jesus (e.g. Epiphany, miracles, transfiguration, resurrection) and explain using examples, how images, signs and symbols in the Liturgical year convey this important truth of faith for Christians. [CCC nos. 1153-1162]

CL3.2: Name the images and symbols associated with Holy Thursday and Pentecost (e.g. sacred oils, bread and wine, foot washing, wind and tongues of fire) and explain what they convey and how their meaning deepen our Christian faith and guides our life of witness and service. [CCC nos. 1145-1155]

CL3.3: Examine the Baptismal liturgy of the Easter Vigil and explain why the liturgy begins with the Litany of the Saints to which the names of those to be baptized are added, and why it is appropriate form of prayer to the saints. (Through baptism we become members of the communion of Saints. When we pray to the saints, we're simply asking them to help us, by praying to God on our behalf, or thanking them for having already done so.) [CCC nos. 946-959; 1173]

# Grade 5: Living a Moral Life

## **Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and the Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.
- The Church Magisterium (i.e. Pope and Bishops) have the sole responsibility for interpretation of God’s Word as revealed in Sacred Scripture and Tradition providing moral teachings concerning Christian living on issues of faith and morality.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through our conscience, the judgement of reason aided by faith, we can judge the morality of our actions.
- God has given us freedom of will to choose to participate in the fullness of life offered by God and therefore we are responsible for our moral actions.
- The morality of a human act depends on the object of the act that is chosen, the intention of the person acting, and the circumstances of the action.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church can assist us in developing an informed conscience in order to live a moral life and in seeking forgiveness and reconciliation after we have sinned.

## ***Overall Expectations***

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding how the New Law (i.e. Law of the Gospel, Jesus Christ, work of the Holy Spirit) expressed in the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and “The New Commandment” leads to the perfection of the Ten Commandments. [CCC nos. 1965-1986; 1987-2029]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of conscience as a source of help in judging our moral actions and our responsibility for the results of our actions. [CCC nos. 1749-1761; 1776-1802]

ML3: Explain the importance of the teaching role of the Church (i.e. Magisterium) in assisting society and individuals to reflect on moral issues and to respond in ways that promote the dignity of the human person and the call to holiness. [CCC nos. 2030-2040]

### ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Examine the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) to identify the relationship of the Decalogue of the Old Testament to the New Law (Law of the Gospels) and its authoritative teachings and guidance for the early Christian community. [CCC nos. 1965-1986; 1987-2029]

ML1.2: Explain how the Holy Spirit helped the early church to live the New Law (Law of the Gospels) and how this help continues in the Church today (through the gift of grace in the sacraments and the authoritative teachings of the Magisterium). [CCC nos. 1965-1986; 1987-2029]

ML1.3: Identify, using passages from the New Testament, the ways we are called to live the New Commandment (i.e. conversion of heart, developing in our lives an interior law of charity, openness to the grace of the Holy Spirit) in the choices we make, in our relationship with God and others. [CCC nos. 1965-1986]

ML1.4: Identify through the lives of the saints how being people of faith, hope and charity (i.e. the “evangelical counsels”) promotes the development of charity in our lives and perfection in living the New Law. [CCC nos. 1973-1974; 1987-2029]

ML2.1: Examine the narrative of the first sin (Genesis 2) and explain what it tells us about human free will and responsibility, how it illustrates an understanding of the “sources of morality” and how it describes the consequences for immoral actions i.e. sin. [CCC nos. 407-408; 1730-1775]

ML2.2: Distinguish between a morally good act and a morally evil act and describe the positive or negative effect that our passions can have. [CCC nos. 1755-1775]

ML2.3: Describe the three sources of morality outlined in the moral teachings of the Church upon which the morality of a human act depends (i.e. the morality of a human act depends on: the object of the act that is chosen, the intention of the person acting, and the circumstances of the action) and apply them to an analysis of various moral dilemmas a person might face. [CCC nos. 1749-1754]

ML3.1: Identify and examine a selection of biblical passages to unfold what God revealed about the responsibility of individuals and social institutions to care for the poor and the sick, to be just in what they do.

ML3.2: List the precepts of the Church and explain how they strengthen our moral life, the spirit of prayer, and growth in the love of God and neighbour. [CCC nos. 2041-2043]

ML3.3: Identify the principles of social justice outlined by the Magisterium of the Church and explain why they are teachings that address communal social sin and are called to holiness. [CCC nos. 1928-1948; Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church]

# Grade 5: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic in its life and witness.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through intercessory prayers and by their example, the saints lead us to a life of holiness.
- Mary is the first among the Communion of Saints and the first disciple of Christ.
- The doctrine of the Communion of Saints describes the unity of the Church as two-fold: a communion in holy things and a communion of holy people. [CCC nos. 946-959]

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand that in the life of the Church we are called to carry out the mission of Christ (Catholic and Apostolic). [CCC nos. 783-786; 830-870]

LC2: Understand how in the life of the Church it identifies saints, and how we are drawn closer to Christ through Mary, and the Communion of Saints. [CCC nos. 946-962; 963-975]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Articulate the important ways that the Church continues in its “apostolic” witness (i.e. succession of ministry, teaching, Magisterium) and commitment to the “apostolate” (i.e. being sent out to proclaim the Good News, acts of charity e.g. Kairos, St. Vincent de Paul, ShareLife, Development and Peace). [CCC nos. 857-870]

LC1.2: Identify how members of the Church witness to God’s universal love, to the nature of the Church being “catholic” and to the promotion of relationships with non-Christians (i.e. Muslims) and other paths of missionary witness. [CCC nos. 830-856]

LC1.3: Connect the missionary and apostolic qualities of the Christian community i.e. mission and service of the Church, to the priestly, prophetic and royal roles and responsibilities of being a Christian in the life and mission of their school community (e.g. examine their own commitment to including/excluding others, advocate against injustice, service projects). [CCC nos. 783-786]

LC2.1: Articulate how intercession to the saints draws the whole Church more firmly into the path of holiness (i.e. prayer and drawing upon the example of their lives of faith and service). [CCC nos. 954-959]

LC2.2: Identify Mary's role of discipleship using passages of the Old and New Testament, link this with the mystery of her Son Jesus Christ and identify the virtues that distinguish her as the first disciple (obedience and trust to God's will e.g. Magnificat). [CCC nos. 963-970]

LC2.3: Identify in Apostles Creed the two meanings of the term "communion of saints" (the communion of "holy things" and "holy persons") and explain how this affects our understanding of the meaning of Church. [CCC nos. 946-962]

# Grade 5: Living in Solidarity

**Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

**Big Ideas:**

- The Church which is the Body of Christ derives its authority from Christ who is its head and exercises its authority for the good of all. [CCC nos. 871-913]

**Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

**Big Ideas:**

- The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society.
- The Church instructs individuals and societies to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first (Matt. 35:31-46); this is accomplished on a global level by distributing goods fairly throughout the world; bringing immediate aid to those in need; and working for structural changes that establish a fairer distribution of goods while addressing the root causes of poverty.

**Fundamental Concept: LS3**

Our mission is to evangelize (i.e. proclaim the Gospel message) and to witness to Jesus Christ [CCC nos. 748-870]

**Big Ideas:**

- The Church, in its dialogue with Christian churches, with other religious traditions, recognizes the seeds of the Gospel that are contained in these ecclesial Christian communities and monotheistic religious traditions.
- Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue invites Christians to seek unity, to respect the gift of religious diversity in the search for the Truth and in the articulation of common beliefs, while developing an attitude of respect for religious differences and the openness and desire to seek communion.

## *Overall Expectations*

LS1: Understand that the authority exercised by the Church is derived from Christ its Head, animated by the gift of the Holy Spirit, and demonstrated in our witness of Christ through the gift of loving service in the Church, to society and the world. [CCC nos. 737-747; 781-810; 871-913; 1913-1927]

LS2: Focus: Fundamental love for the poor and vulnerable

Understand that human solidarity in our Christian living, understood as “friendship”, is reflected in the example of Jesus who calls us to act justly by putting the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. [CCC nos. 1939-1948]

LS3: Demonstrate an understanding of Christianity as a religion that seeks unity within the experience of diversity. [CCC nos. 748-870]

### ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Identify through the Letters of St. Paul (i.e. the analogy of the body 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Romans 12:3-8) the key characteristics of what it means to be Church and explain the importance of recognizing, developing, and willingly sharing our gifts and talents in order to give witness to Christ. [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS1.2: Identify the passages of Scripture in the New Testament which describe the Church receiving authority from Christ i.e. the mandate given to the apostles (Matthew 28:20; Matt. 10:1), and give examples of how this is reflected today in the Church. [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS1.3: List ways the Church exercises its authority both locally and globally through loving service which witnesses to Christ, i.e. promoting the common good (sharing of the gifts given of Holy Spirit through personal acts of charity and through participation in charitable organizations e.g. St. Vincent de Paul, Development and Peace, Catholic Charities, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women’s League). [CCC nos. 1897-1904]

LS2.1: Examine Matthew 25:31-46 to identify and summarize what Jesus reveals about the judgement of God concerning the human dignity of others, the “friendship” that we are to see and establish with others (i.e. hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, and those in prison) and how he will judge our actions towards others. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Define the meaning of the virtue of solidarity with respect to material and spiritual goods and link solidarity to the Church’s social justice teaching on the preferential love of the poor and vulnerable (i.e. the human need and capacity of love and care for the poor and vulnerable which is an expression of our faith). [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Apply the principle of solidarity to global and/or local issues of injustice and describe ways that students can become involved in projects of “social charity”. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS3.1: Identify signs of diversity within the Church (many gifts, cultures, nationalities, charisms expressed in diverse forms of prayer and celebration, e.g. devotions, saints, cultural signs attached to the sacraments, etc.). [CCC nos. 811- 822]

LS3.2: Explain the ways that unity is promoted in the Catholic Church (i.e. profession of one faith, common celebration of worship e.g. Eucharist & sacraments, apostolic succession of leadership). [CCC nos. 811- 822]

# Grade 5: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer is central to Christian life and is experienced as structured and spontaneous, individual and communal, and is enriched by a variety of elements that deepen the experience of prayer (silence, symbols, gospel reading, reflection, images, music, etc.).
- The Church, in recognizing the inseparable nature of human beings and their society and culture, seeks to bring prayer to life and life to prayer (i.e. inculturation).

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer: Forms and Expressions of Prayer*

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer has three major expressions found in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, each with their own unique characteristics: vocal, meditative, and contemplative.

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand how the Holy Spirit continues to teach us to pray individually and communally through the Church. [CCC nos. 2623; 2697-2724; 2617-2622]

PR2: Demonstrate an understanding of the three expressions of prayer: vocal, meditation, and contemplation and how each has been promoted within the Church. [CCC nos. 2697-2724]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Distinguish what is essential and different between personal and communal prayer and provide examples of how the Church has adapted communal prayers to reflect the culture of a particular people and the unity of the Christian faith (e.g. use of Peace Pipe at Eucharist for First Nations People of Canada). [CCC nos. 2562-2565; 2767-2772]

PR1.2: Describe the variety of ways that Catholics express prayer during the communal celebration of the Mass (i.e. song, petitions, prayers, posture, kneeling, fold our hands, bowing our heads, cultural expressions and in silence) and suggest how and why all these ways deepen our experience of prayer. [CCC nos. 2617-2619; 2622]

PR1.3: Identify in a selection of biblical passages the elements of personal and communal prayer (i.e. Abraham, Moses, David, Job, the prophets, Jesus, Mary and the disciples,

Chosen People, disciples, apostles etc.) that is inspired by the Holy Spirit and describe how these two forms of prayer are commonly experienced today (i.e. personal morning and evening prayer, group retreats, pilgrimages, charismatic and liturgical). [CCC nos. 2566-2622]

PR2.1: Identify and use various means to enter into and experience vocal prayer (i.e. personal and communal, music, rosary, stations of the cross, novena, litanies), meditative prayer using various biblical passages (e.g. the Beatitudes, Jesus' prayer of petition while on the cross – Father forgive them..., Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane) and contemplative prayer (i.e. silence, images e.g. icons, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament). [CCC nos. 2697-2724]

PR2.2: Demonstrate an understanding of the unique characteristics of the three major expressions of prayer found in the Tradition of the Church and witnessed in the life of Jesus and Mary (i.e. vocal, meditation, and contemplation). [CCC nos. 2697-2724]

# Grade 6: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- When we look on creation with the eyes of faith, we can know with certainty about the existence of God, the cause and end of everything (faith and reason reveal God). [CCC no. 46]
- The one true God, our Creator and Lord, can be known with certainty from his works, by the light of human reason. [CCC no. 47]
- Faith, which is a gift from God, and reason which is a human capacity, work together to reveal Truth.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- All that Jesus did and taught, both in his hidden and public life, is to be seen in the light of the mysteries of Christmas and Easter. [CCC nos. 512-513]
- In the Biblical account of the Annunciation, God chooses to share in our humanity and through Mary's "yes" (fiat) she accepts the Divine Word of God as her son so that God might live among us in the second person of the Trinity; Jesus, the Son of God.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is Catholic (i.e. universal) because Christ revealed that God's salvation is for all people, and thus her mission is to spread the message of the Gospel to the world and bring all people into communion with God through Christ.

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church's teaching on how the human person comes to know and believe in God (from the created world through the natural light of reason, through God's self-revelation in Sacred Scripture and through the handing-on of the faith by the Church). [CCC nos. 27-49; 166-184; 279-324]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church's teaching concerning the mysteries of the hidden and public life of Jesus Christ (incarnation, suffering and death, rising from the dead and ascending into heaven). [CCC nos. 50-73; 101-141; 422-682]

BL3: Explain how the Church is called in its mission to witness to Catholicity (i.e. the Church is Catholic). [CCC nos. 830-856]

### ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Examine a selection of biblical passages that reveal the link between sin, grace, conversion and mercy in God's plan of salvation (e.g. Genesis 1-3; Jn. 1; Sin and separation from God - Isaiah 59:2, Romans 3:23; Grace and mercy - Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5-7; faith in Christ as source of salvation - Romans 5:8, Romans 4:12). [CCC nos. 27-49; 166-184; 279-324]

BL1.2: Compare Church teaching on the relationship between faith and reason with the approach of natural and human sciences and explain how the latter might lead to an erroneous belief in God's non-existence. (Reason and faith work together to assure us of the existence of God, i.e. Truth.) [CCC nos. 27-49; 279-324]

BL1.3: Identify the many ways we come to know God from the physical world and the human person (i.e. creation). [CCC nos. 27-49; 166-184]

BL2.1: Distinguish the Mysteries of Jesus' Infancy and Hidden Life (Incarnation, Visitation, Circumcision, Epiphany, presentation in the temple, flight into Egypt, at home in Nazareth) from the Mysteries of his Public Life as revealed in the Gospels (Baptism, Temptation, Transfiguration, Paschal Mysteries) and link them to the celebrations of the Liturgical Seasons. [CCC nos. 512-570]

BL2.2: Through an examination of the account of the Incarnation in Scripture, identify the role of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and describe the meaning and significance of the Incarnation (i.e. the Son of God became human). [CCC nos. 461-494]

BL2.3: Describe through examples how the Church has handed on Revelation regarding the Incarnation through Tradition (e.g. preaching of the Word, celebration of the sacraments, catechesis, prayers and devotions). [CCC nos. 456-511]

BL2.4: Explain the significance and meaning of the names - Jesus, Christ, Lord and the only Son of God - as revealed in Sacred Scripture. [CCC nos. 422-455]

BL3.1: Define the term "Catholicity" and explain how it is understood in relationship to Christ's presence within the Church (i.e. fullness of the means of salvation) and secondly with respect to its missionary mandate of being sent out by Christ (i.e. mission is to the whole human race). [CCC nos. 830-856]

BL3.2: Identify and explain using examples how the signs of "Catholicity" (i.e. Petrine ministry, apostolic succession, orders - ministry, sacraments, creed and teachings, discipline (canon law) are present in both the universal Church (i.e. universal world-wide Catholic Church) and in the particular Church (i.e. diocese, parish). [CCC nos. 830-856]

BL3.3: Identify the major religions in the world today and the bonds which Christianity has with them (i.e. common origin and end of the human race – dignity of the human person, human freedom; the search for God – religious freedom and search for the truth) and communicate how this is a credible sign of “Catholicity”. [CCC nos. 830-856]

# Grade 6: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Sacraments of the Church have their roots in Scripture i.e. the ministry which Christ handed on to the Church through the apostles.
- The Sacraments of Service (Holy Orders, Matrimony) are sacraments of commitment which witness to decisions of loving service in the Church and the world.
- In the sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out grace to sustain us for a life of service to the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- The celebration of the Eucharist i.e. Mass has two unified parts – the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Eucharist.
- The Eucharist was instituted by Christ and through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Mass we encounter His presence in proclaimed Word (i.e. Scripture) and under the sign of bread and wine (i.e. sacramental presence of the Body and Blood of Christ).
- The celebration of the Eucharist is a communion, a Breaking of Bread, a sacred meal in which we are nourished and become the presence of Christ in our world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The liturgies of the Liturgical Seasons and the Sacraments, marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours developed throughout the Tradition of the Church, reveal the mysteries of Christ's life.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Holy Orders

Understand that the Sacraments strengthen, sanctify and sustain our witness to Christ through our life decisions of commitment and service in the Church and world. [CCC nos. 1533-1600]

CL2: Understand the order of the Mass and the meaning of the various rites within the Liturgy. [CCC nos. 1345-1355; 1396-1397]

CL3: Demonstrate an understanding of the Liturgical seasons of Lent, Easter and the Feast of Pentecost as they are revealed through rituals, images and symbols and the Church's sacraments (the mysteries of Christ's life i.e. Paschal Mystery). [CCC nos. 1113-1130]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Connect the special graces received by the Holy Spirit in the one being ordained to Holy Orders, in the spiritual character, in the orientation to the ministries of Christ (i.e. Priest, Teacher and Pastor) and outline how these continue to serve the life of the Church and world. [CCC nos. 1581-1600]

CL1.2: Identify in each of the three Rites of Holy Orders i.e. Bishop, Priest, and Deacon – who can receive and celebrate the sacrament; the rituals, blessings and prayers, signs and symbols that signify and convey the grace and meaning of these sacraments; the effects of the sacrament; and link the ordained priesthood to the baptismal priesthood of the laity. [CCC nos. 1554-1580]

CL1.3: Outline the historical development of the priesthood from its beginnings in the Old Testament Covenant to the ministry of the priesthood today (i.e. Melchizedek and Levitical orders; its perfection in the leadership of Christ; Christ's institution of the priesthood in the Apostles (New Testament); its formation in the early Church; and its life in the Church today). [CCC nos. 1533-1553]

CL2.1: Identify the parts of the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Eucharist and explain their fundamental unity in relationship to the New Testament narratives (e.g. Emmaus, Last Supper). [CCC nos. 1345-1355]

CL2.2: Explain the significance and meaning of the "breaking of bread" for the early Church and its relationship to the concluding rite of Mass (being sent forth to serve and witness to Christ, e.g. work of ecclesial communities – St. Vincent de Paul society, Catholic Women's League, Knights of Columbus; tithing, volunteer work). [CCC nos. 1396-1397]

CL2.3: Describe the actions and words of the Institution Narrative (Consecration) and explain the significance of this within the Mass in relationship to John's Gospel and the Washing of the Feet.

CL3.1 Make connections between the Church's Liturgy of the Word (i.e. Gospel) celebrated during Lent and Easter and the themes of reconciliation and salvation (e.g. Repentance, forgiveness, restitution, hope and justice). [CCC nos. 1127-1130]

CL3.2: Describe various ways Christ's death and Resurrection are expressed in both the sacraments of Initiation and the liturgical rites and symbols of the Easter Triduum (e.g. through symbols - Darkness / Light, Fire, the Paschal Candle, empty tabernacle; through word and song - Exultat, Scripture Readings; through sacramentals - incense, water, oils, cross). [CCC nos. 1127-1130]

CL3.3: Examine the rituals in the Church's liturgies for Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, and the Easter Vigil, and unravel the meaning that each symbol, gesture and word has in relationship to Christ and how it may apply to our Christian life. [CCC nos. 1117-1126]

# Grade 6: Living a Moral Life

## **Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The human person who is made in the “image of God” is called to live and act in ways that reflect human dignity.
- Human reason, Scripture and Tradition reveal the Moral Law of God in its different expressions (e.g. Natural Moral Law, Revealed Law – Old Law i.e. Ten Commandments and New Law i.e. New Law or Law of the Gospel).

## **Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through the judgement of reason aided by faith, we can judge the morality of our actions.
- Conscience is the subjective moral guide for Christian living that judges actions in light of the objective Moral Law i.e. Ten Commandments and Beatitudes; a judgement of reason concerning the moral choices we face and the actions we perform.
- Human beings have a responsibility to form their conscience in accordance with Truth i.e. Jesus Christ, Word of God, Moral Law, through grace and the work of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church’s Magisterium (i.e. Pope / Bishops) can assist us in developing an informed conscience in order to live a moral life.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

### **Big Ideas:**

- We are called to become both free and responsible in the Christian moral life, to become more virtuous through our moral choices.
- Sin can only be overcome by first acknowledging our need and asking for God’s forgiveness, accepting God’s grace and living in the Holy Spirit.
- We are called to engage in a journey of interior transformation as Christians, to grow in holiness of life, and to express this in a life of charity and perfection.

## ***Overall Expectations***

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of how the Natural Moral Law is the foundation for the Decalogue (i.e. Ten Commandments) and that they express the norms of reason for

judging human morality and the building of the human community. [CCC nos. 1905-1927; 1954-1960; 2196-2257; 2258-2330]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the formation of our conscience and describe the various ways in which this has been undertaken in the lives of holy men and women through the Tradition (i.e. pastors, teachers, saints, and martyrs). [CCC nos. 1776-1802]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding of the important personal responsibility that each person has to form their moral conscience as a sign of Christian maturity and a commitment to the call to holiness. [CCC nos. 1730-1775; 1776-1802; 1929-1933]

### ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Describe the basic principles of the Church's teaching concerning Natural Moral Law (the law God has written on our hearts – Hebrews 8:10) and explain how it is the foundation prepared by God for the revealed Law of Scripture (i.e. Old Law, New Law) and the formulation of human civil laws. [CCC nos. 1905-1927; 1954-1960]

ML1.2: Explain through example, how God's gift of human reason promotes human dignity (reason and conscience i.e. natural law, work together to help us discern what is good and what is evil) and identify ways we can use reason to participate in the wisdom and goodness of Creation (i.e. care of the created universe, natural and human sciences, human development and building of communities, etc.). [CCC nos. 1954-1960]

ML1.3: Articulate the Church's teaching concerning the Fourth & Fifth Commandments – "Honour your father and mother; You shall not kill" and apply these to the moral issues facing society today (e.g. sanctity of human life – abortion and euthanasia, dignity of the human person, social living conditions; honouring parents – disobedience, stubbornness, disrespectful words and action, scorning, angrily talking back, refusing to participate in household responsibilities, striking or cursing parents, stealing from parents, etc.). [CCC nos. 2196-2257; 2258-2330]

ML2.1: Examine a selection of Scripture passages and summarize what Jesus taught his disciples to help form their conscience (live in accordance with God's will - Matt. 5-7: Beatitudes, Sermon on the Mount; instructions on becoming a disciple and servant - Matt. 25: Thy will be done - the Garden of Gethsemane: Matt. 26:36-46). [CCC nos. 1783-1785]

ML2.2: With reference to the Church's moral teachings, define the meaning of conscience (*see: Lumen Gentium, no. 16*) and the process of "conscience formation" and explain using examples how an informed conscience can be helped when making good moral decisions (to judge and act with knowledge). [CCC nos. 1776-1802]

ML2.3: Apply a Catholic model of moral decision-making (i.e. SEE, JUDGE, and ACT) to ethical issues that arise at school or in the world (bullying, fighting, failing to do homework, and disrespecting authority). [CCC nos. 1749-1785]

ML3.1: Locate and examine gospel passages to identify how Jesus called individuals to holiness and guided them in the moral life (e.g. Matt. 19:16-26 - the rich young man, Jn. 4:1-26 - the Samaritan woman, Mk. 10:35-45 - the disciples request for positions of honour, etc.). [CCC nos. 2012-2016]

ML3.2: With reference to Catholic moral teaching, identify the characteristics of holiness and what is necessary if individuals are to “be holy” as Jesus is holy.

ML3.3: Explain using examples the relationship between making good moral choices, developing Christian virtues and holiness.

ML3.4: Examine the lives of the saints and provide examples of how their lives modeled for us what it means to live a moral and holy life (e.g. St. Brother André, Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day, St. Padre Pio, Blessed Mother Teresa). [CCC nos. 1783-1785]

# Grade 6: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- Each person is called to a role of service in the life of the Church community as witnesses to Christ in the world (laity, consecrated religious life, and ordained ministry).
- The Church is a hierarchical structure and a unity of persons who share one common mission to build up the reign of God on earth.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- Among the members of the Body of Christ – the Church, there are those who out of love of God, have consecrated their lives to Christ and have vowed to live lives of chastity through celibacy, poverty and obedience.
- Mary is the first among the Communion of Saints and as the Mother of Jesus is also the Mother of the Church.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand that the life of Christ's Faithful in the community of the Church is organized into roles of responsibility and societies of witness and service. [CCC nos. 871-945]

LC2: Understand the role of Mary Mother of God, Mother of the Church. [CCC nos. 484-511; 963-975; 2673-2682]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: With reference to Church Tradition, outline some of the many forms of consecrated religious life within the Church (priestly; monastic; cloistered religious life i.e. Carmelite nuns and monks; orders and congregations i.e. Franciscan or Dominican order) and describe how and why they live out the evangelical counsels (vows of poverty, chastity and obedience). [CCC nos. 914-933]

LC1.2: Identify and explain the nature of ministry within the Church (e.g. its hierarchical structure, the role of the teaching, sanctifying and governing offices and how they are exercised). [CCC nos. 871-896]

LC1.3: Explain the vocation of the baptized and the importance of their participation in the life and mission of the Church, and give examples of how the laity fulfill the priestly office (i.e. sanctification), the prophetic office (i.e. evangelization and teaching), and the kingly office (i.e. pastoral governance) their mission. [CCC nos. 897-913]

LC2.1: Define the Church's teaching concerning the life of Mary from Scripture and Tradition (i.e. Immaculate Conception, Assumption) and why these are important signs which point to the life of Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 484-511; 963-975]

LC2.2: Articulate the reasons why our faith teaches us that Mary is the Mother of the Church. [CCC nos. 963-975; 2673-2682]

LC2.3: Explain how Mary as both the first disciple and the Mother of the Church, supports us in our growth in holiness and virtue (John 19:27 – Behold, your mother). [CCC nos. 963-975; 2673-2682]

# Grade 6: Living in Solidarity

**Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

**Big Ideas:**

- As members of Christ's Body, each of us has a responsibility to witness to Christ, both in our individual lives and in society.
- We witness to Christ through our spirituality, our words and deeds, our moral choices, and by promotion of the common good of society.

**Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

**Big Ideas:**

- Sacred Scripture reveals the transcendent dignity of the human person, their equality and diversity of being and the desire of God for human solidarity (i.e. justice, peace and harmony within the human community).
- Jesus taught us about the dignity of all people and how we are to identify with and to love our neighbour.
- The two great commandments, love of God and love of neighbour, call us to promote this dignity and equality, to respect differences and to foster solidarity (i.e. material and spiritual friendship) with one another.

**Fundamental Concept: LS3**

Our mission is to evangelize (i.e. proclaim the Gospel message) and to witness to Jesus Christ [CCC nos. 748-870]

**Big Ideas:**

- Jesus' life and ministry was universal, it included outreach to believers and non-believers.
- Jesus' mission was to witness to God and the Gospel message of salvation.
- Christ entrusted this mission to the apostles, to the Church, to all baptized Christians, and to people of good will and faith, who believe in God.
- The Holy Spirit is active in and through the Church, in the lives of all people of good will regardless of their religion, culture or ethnicity.
- People of various Christian churches and other religious faith traditions share common values with Catholic Christianity: belief in God, Truth, justice, morality, dignity of the human person, a sense of the common good, beauty and culture, stewardship of creation, and a desire to deepen their relationship with God the Creator of all.
- Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue invites Christians to seek unity, to respect the gift of religious diversity in the search for the Truth and in the articulation of common beliefs, while developing an attitude of respect for religious differences and the openness and desire to seek communion.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Understand that each person is responsible for participation in society, to discern, to freely choose their vocation and to make a contribution in the world. [CCC nos. 1262-1284; 1877-1885; 1886-1896; 1913-1927]

LS2: Focus: Principle of Rights and Responsibilities

Understand that by virtue of our human dignity, out of respect for equality and diversity of being and the common good, all human beings are to enjoy certain fundamental human rights (e.g. the right to life, liberty, religious freedom, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment). [CCC nos. 1886-1896; 1928-1948]

LS3: Understand that there are diverse religious expressions in the world that celebrate God's presence in the special moments of human life which are analogous to the sacraments of the Church. [CCC nos. 748-870; 1113-1134]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Identify and compare the call stories in Scripture which reflect conversion and fidelity to God as the foundation of our vocation and which can transform the lives of others (e.g. Moses 3:7-10; Jeremiah 1:1-10; John 1:35-42; Mary - Luke 1:26-38). [CCC nos. 1262-1284]

LS1.2: Describe the call of Christian 'vocation' received in baptism (i.e. everyone is called to serve society, to discern their gifts and talents and to be united in making a contribution in the world) and determine ways we can respond to this call as young people. [CCC nos. 1262-1284; 1897-1927]

LS1.3: Identify the areas of "personal responsibility" that students assume in their lives and connect this to the vocation to participate in family, school and parish. [CCC nos. 1913-1917]

LS2.1: Identify and examine events from Jesus' life and his ministry when he challenged dehumanizing situations and social structures (e.g. Samaritan Woman at the well, Sabbath rule and the man with the withered hand, the cure of the man who was paralyzed) and link the message of these passages to how individuals and institutions should address local and global situations that need to be challenged today. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Explain the distinction between human differences that belong to God's plan and "sinful inequalities" which are a contradiction to the Gospel, and then link this to the work of organizations that help to alleviate injustice in the local and global community. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Identify situations of injustice in society, our country and the world which oppose the virtue of human dignity and fundamental human rights (e.g. the right to life, liberty,

religious freedom, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment) and use examples to describe social justice which reflect the principle that “everyone should look upon his neighbour (without any exception) as ‘another self’”. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS3.1: Name several of the diverse religions that are present in their community and compare some of the ways they celebrate God’s presence at special moments of human life (i.e. birth, marriage, death, days of religious observance, feasts and festivals, images of God). [CCC nos. 811-822]

LS3.2: Describe how Christians celebrate the presence of God in the special moments of their lives (birth, coming of age, marriage, death) and link these sacramental moments to similar celebrations within Judaism (e.g. Baptism and Jewish naming ceremony, confirmation and Bat Mitzvah/Bar Mitzvah). [CCC nos. 748-870; 1113-1134]

LS3.3 Provide examples of how we can show respect for people from diverse religious backgrounds (e.g. learn about their beliefs and practices, look for similarities with your own faith but also notice differences, discuss ways you are similar, suspend judgement, treat them as you would like to be treated by someone from a religion other than your own, ask questions in a respectful and polite manner). [CCC nos. 811- 822]

# Grade 6: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- A life of prayer is essential to living a just life; prayer comes forth from and forms a commitment to conversion of heart.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer: Forms and Expressions of Prayer*

### **Big Ideas:**

- The life of prayer requires the development of habits which reflect the spirit and example of Jesus' life of prayer.
- Prayer has many forms and expressions found in Scripture and Tradition - blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise, vocal, meditative, and contemplative.

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand how our prayers must be reflected in the lives we live as Christians, i.e. call to justice, peace and reconciliation, struggle to form the habit of prayer. [CCC 2725-2745]

PR2: Understand how the Word of God, Scripture, is important in the Eucharist and for daily reflection (social justice action). [CCC nos. 2568-2600]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Identify the obstacles to prayer and the ways to overcome this struggle so that prayer and our Christian life are inseparable. [CCC nos. 2725-2751]

PR1.2: Identify real life situations of injustice (poverty and starvation, oppression, prejudice, environmental harm, etc.) and develop intercessory prayers on behalf of those in need. [CCC nos. 2634-2636]

PR1.3: Explain how praying the psalms and prayers of the Catholic Tradition (e.g. Prayer of St. Francis, St. Ignatius of Loyola) transforms the hearts of persons (teach and form us through the gift of God's grace) and apply the messages of justice, peace and reconciliation found in these prayers to issues of injustice, peace and reconciliation young people face today ( e.g. cyberbullying, vandalism, poverty, inequality, exclusion). [CCC nos. 2585-2589; 2607-2615; 2683-84]

PR2.1: Identify which liturgical seasons present scripture passages (i.e. Old and New Testament) which focus on the social justice dimension of the Christian life and show how these are expressed in the tradition of vocal and meditative prayer. [CCC nos. 2568-2619]

PR2.2: Identify and demonstrate how in the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word can become a source of meditation and prayer with scripture which assists us in living the Christian life (i.e. moments of silence, lectio divina, homilies, commentaries on scripture). [CCC nos. 2652-2655; 2659-2660]

# Hope Expectations: Intermediate

*By the end of grade 8, it is our hope that students will be individuals who:*

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>Believing</b></p>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognize in the saving story of the Christian faith God’s call to holiness;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the authority of the Magisterium in the interpretation of scripture and its message for contemporary Christian living;</li> <li>❖ Actively reflect on Sacred Scripture as a means to grow in understanding and practice of the Catholic faith;</li> <li>❖ Proclaim with confidence a belief in the mysteries of the Catholic faith, the Creed.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Celebrating</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Participate with joy and gratitude in the Sacramental life of the Church and celebrate the Eucharist as the central sacrament of the Catholic Church;</li> <li>❖ Recognize the presence of Christ in the Liturgy of the Word, under the sign of the bread and wine of the Eucharist, in the celebrant priest, and in the assembled Body of Christ;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the importance of participating in the celebration of holy days, feast days and days dedicated to the saints;</li> <li>❖ Continue to deepen their understanding of the multi-fold meaning of symbols, scripture narratives, ritual actions and practices associated with the liturgical celebration of the saints and the salvation stories of our faith, i.e. the Paschal Mystery.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Living a Moral Life</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Make moral decisions in light of gospel values and with an informed conscience;</li> <li>❖ Rely on the power of faith, hope, charity and grace when faced with a personal, social or moral challenge;</li> <li>❖ Recognize that “sin, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness are part of the human journey” and that the cross is the ultimate sign of forgiveness which resides at the heart of redemption; (CGE: 1j)</li> <li>❖ Seek guidance from Catholic moral teaching when faced with a moral dilemma;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate God’s gifts of grace, freedom, conscience and reason and accept the responsibility that comes with each.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Living in Communion</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Strive to integrate faith with all arenas of their life: personal, social, academic, etc. in order to show God’s love and promote God’s reign on earth;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ and accept the responsibility of this gift;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the role of the Holy Spirit in initiating believers into</li> </ul>  |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
|                             | the communion of saints, forming them for a life of service and promoting in them a holy and virtuous life.  |
| <b>Living in Solidarity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Understand that one’s purpose or call in life comes from God and strive to discern and prepare to live out this call throughout life’s journey; (CGE: 1g)</li> <li>❖ Develop attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and act to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good;</li> <li>❖ Respect the faith traditions, world religions and the life journeys of all people of good will.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Praying</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Seek intimacy with God and celebrate communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship;</li> <li>❖ Appreciate the gift of the common prayers of the Church and how they teach us to pray;</li> <li>❖ Incorporate Sacred Scripture and other forms of prayer into their prayer life;</li> <li>❖ Turn to Christ’s gift of the Our Father as a model for prayer and the saints as a model for a life of prayer;</li> <li>❖ Reflect on the whole of the Liturgical year of the Church as an unfolding of the story of our salvation, made known through symbol, Word, ritual action and prayer.</li> </ul> |

# Grade 7: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The fullness of God's self-revelation is manifested in the incarnation of God's Word; the person of Jesus who is truly God and truly human. [CCC no. 73]
- The four gospels are at the heart of the scriptures because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of Christ Jesus. [CCC nos. 124-125]

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Creed is the summary of the central beliefs of the Christian faith (e.g. Christ's death, descent into Hell, resurrection and ascension into Heaven, forgiveness of sin, resurrection, final judgement, and eternal life).
- Through Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, he restored our relationship with God the Father, and opened the way to eternal life (i.e. heaven), securing for all who believe, forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is Apostolic because Christ handed on to the apostles and their successors (i.e. Pope and Bishops) his ministry of teaching, sanctification and of governance of the Church.
- Christ governs the Church through Peter and the other apostles who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops who continue Christ's mission here on earth.

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of Christ as the centre of Sacred Scripture (i.e. the Messiah who fulfills the covenantal promise of God's Reign). [CCC nos. 101-141; 422-682]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of Jesus Christ as the Messiah who fulfills the covenant of God's salvation through the Paschal Mystery (i.e. his passion, death and resurrection / ascension). [CCC nos. 50-73; 101-141; 422-682]

BL3: Demonstrate an understanding of how the Church is called in its mission to witness to being apostolic (i.e. the Church is Apostolic). [CCC nos. 857-896]

### ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Articulate what is meant by the Church’s belief that “God speaks only one single Word through all the words of Scripture” and that this unique Word is Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 101-141]

BL1.2: Compare the Old and New Testament images of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God and link these to the understanding of the “Unique Word” – Jesus Christ and his teaching of the Beatitudes. [CCC nos. 101-141; 1716-1729]

BL1.3: Explain why the Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures. [CCC nos. 101-141]

BL2.1: Identify the significance and meaning of Jesus Christ’s redemptive death on the Cross in God’s Plan of Salvation (i.e. Jesus and Israel, the Law, the Messiah, the sacrifice of the Cross for our sins). [CCC nos. 571-623]

BL2.2: Summarize the Church’s teaching on the meaning and significance of Christ’s death (buried, descent into Hell) and resurrection on the third day and describe how these events are celebrated in the Church’s tradition (i.e. Liturgical Season, sacraments, etc.). [CCC nos. 571-658]

BL2.3: Examine the passages in the New Testament that describe Jesus’ “resurrection appearances, ascent into heaven and being seated at the right hand of the Father”, where he will “judge the living and the dead” to unfold their meaning and significance in relation to God’s plan of salvation (e.g. Mt. 28:16-17; John 10:17-18; John 20:19-20, 20:1-2; Luke 24:13-35; Mt. 28:8-10, 16-17; Lk. 24:49-53; Acts 1:3-11, Mt. 25:31-46; Mt. 24). [CCC nos. 631-682]

BL3.1: Examine various passages from the New Testament to identify and describe the mission and life of the early apostles in the post resurrection Christian communities (e.g. Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Mark 16:15; Ephesians 5:19-20, 6:18; Psalms 33:1; Hebrews 3:13, 10:24-25; 2 Timothy 4:2; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; John 14:26, 28:16-20; Acts 2:42-47). [CCC nos. 857-870]

BL3.2: Explain the role and responsibilities of the College of Bishops as the successors of the apostles and the role of the Pope as the successor of Peter. [CCC nos. 857-896]

BL3.3: Identify the three ways in which the Church is Apostolic (i.e. founded on the apostles) and the one aspect which cannot be transmitted (i.e. chosen witnesses of the resurrection). [CCC nos. 857-860]

# Grade 7: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- The Sacraments of Service (Holy Orders, Matrimony) are sacraments of commitment which witness to decisions of loving service in the family, the Church and the World.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- The celebration of the Eucharist i.e. Mass is a remembrance or memorial of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection.
- The Eucharist was instituted by Christ at the Passover meal of the Last Supper.
- Through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Mass, we encounter Christ's presence in Word (i.e. Scripture proclaimed), in the assembled community (i.e. Church - Body of Christ), in the priest (i.e. Head and Shepherd), and under the sign of bread and wine (i.e. sacramental presence of the Body and Blood of Christ).

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church sets aside special days to celebrate the memory of Mary the Mother of God and the Saints who have witnessed in their lives to the Paschal Mystery of Christ.
- Marian devotions are marked by specific rituals, prayers, signs, images and colours which have developed throughout the Tradition of the Church and have become part of our experience of faith.

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Marriage

Understand that the Sacraments strengthen, sanctify and sustain our witness to Christ through our life decisions of commitment and service in the Church and world. [CCC nos. 1601-1666]

CL2: Understand the celebration of the Eucharist with reference to God's plan of salvation through the study of the Word (i.e. Scriptures). [CCC nos. 1333-1344; 1362-1372]

CL3: Understand that the Church venerates Mary the Mother of God and promotes devotion to the Saints throughout the Liturgical Year. [CCC nos. 1172-1178; 1200-1209; 946-975; 2030, 273, 966, 974; 484-511]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Identify the features that constitute a Christian understanding of marital love (unity, indissolubility, fidelity, and openness to procreation); and the benefits (i.e. effects) of the sacrament (an increase of sanctifying grace – the special help of God for husband and wife to love each other faithfully, to bear with each other's faults, and to bring up their children properly) and identify ways the Church and society can both strengthen and benefit from Catholic families and their members. [CCC nos. 1643-1666]

CL1.2: Identify in the Rite of Marriage – requirements for reception (baptism, no prior bond or impediment, free consent), ministers of the sacrament in Roman Rite, the ritual words of consent, blessings, signs and ritual symbols, that signify and convey the grace and meaning of marriage for the couple (i.e. one man and one woman) and explain how this sacrament prepares and supports the couple for a life of service within the family and the world. [CCC nos. 1621-1642]

CL1.3: Examine the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament that reveal the covenantal nature of marriage (Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7-12; Eph. 5:22-32; 1 Thess. 4:4; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 5:32-33; Matt. 19:4-6, 9; Mark 10:11-12; Lk. 16:18; Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:10-11) and compare this image to the covenantal relationship between Christ and the Church. [CCC nos. 1601-1620]

CL2.1: Identify the link between the Old Testament account of the Passover (Exodus), the New Testament accounts of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion of Christ, and the prayers of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

CL2.2: Compare what is signified in the “bread and wine” of the Old Testament to its New Covenant meaning in the New Testament and to the meaning of the Eucharist. (See: Exodus 12; Leviticus 17:11; Isaiah 54:4-6; Hebrews 10:10-14; Matt. 26:26-30; Mk. 6:30-44; Jn. 2:1-12; Jn. 6:23, 32-33, 35, 54-57.) [CCC nos. 1333-1336]

CL2.3: Identify in the liturgical prayers of the Mass, reference to the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the Eucharist and explain why those who receive it become the living Body of Christ – the Church. [CCC nos. 1331; 1367-1374]

CL2.4: Identify in the liturgical prayers of the Mass references to the memorial nature of the liturgy and explain why these references present the Mass as a “true sacrifice”. [CCC nos. 1330-1331; 1362-1368]

CL3.1: Examine the devotions to the Lives of the Saints in the tradition of the Church and explain the various categories which have developed (e.g. martyrs, virgins, apostles, pastors, holy men and women) and also the particular pious devotions, rituals and

sacramentals which have been used to celebrate their lives in the Church's Liturgical Calendar (e.g. patron saints, novenas, blessing of throats, blessing of animals, etc.). [CCC nos. 2030; 946-962]

CL3.2: Gather information to identify the role that icons play in the celebration of Mary in the Byzantine Catholic Church and explain how they express through signs, symbols, colours and emblems her role in the Church's life of faith. [CCC nos. 963-972]

CL3.3: Identify the specific Marian devotions that take place in May and October, and Feasts devoted to Mary during the Liturgical year (e.g. Resurrection - Feast of the Assumption, Incarnation - the Immaculate Conception, the Annunciation, the Visitation) and describe what event in her life each highlights, how these events are related to Christ, and what they reveal about Mary's role in the life of Jesus and the Church. [CCC nos. 484-511; 963-972; 1172-1173; 1200-1209]

# Grade 7: Living a Moral Life

## **Fundamental Concept: ML1**

Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and Church Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.
- The Church Magisterium (i.e. Pope and Bishops) have the sole responsibility for interpretation of God's Word as revealed in Sacred Scripture and Tradition providing moral teachings concerning Christian living on issues of faith and morality.

## **Fundamental Concept: ML2**

Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation

### **Big Ideas:**

- Our conscience is a judgement of reason concerning the moral choices we face and the actions we perform and we are capable of making errors in judgement for which we are responsible.
- Conscience is the subjective moral guide for Christian living and it judges actions in light of the objective Moral Law (i.e. Ten Commandments and Beatitudes).

## **Fundamental Concept: ML3**

Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness

### **Big Ideas:**

- We are called to become both free and responsible in the Christian moral life, to become more virtuous through our moral choices.
- The Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity can only be gained through God's grace and lead us back to God.
- The four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance can be achieved and sustained by human effort (i.e. education and good actions – habits).

## ***Overall Expectations***

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of the Church's teaching role (i.e. Magisterium – Pope / Bishops) concerning Christian morality (i.e. social morality, marriage, sexuality, family life). [CCC nos. 2032-2051; 2331-2400; 2514-2533]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding that when faced with a moral choice in our life, the judgement of our conscience can be right or wrong (i.e. we can choose good or evil, we can develop virtues / vices). [CCC nos. 1762-1775; 1776-1802; 1803-1845]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of developing a life of virtue (good habits and practices; Cardinal and Theological Virtues) in order to discern and implement the moral teachings found in the Gospels and applied through the teachings of the Church. [CCC nos. 1803-1845]

### ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Examine a number of scriptural passages on the centrality of love, marriage and sexuality, and the moral life (e.g. 1 Corinthians 13 – Love; Matthew 22:36-40 – The Greatest Commandment; 1 John 1:14 – No Fear in Love) and explain how they form the basis of Church teaching in these areas. [CCC nos. 1604, 1889, 2069]

ML1.2: Articulate the Church’s teaching concerning the Sixth and Ninth Commandments - “You shall not commit adultery. You shall not covet you neighbours wife” and apply these to the moral issues facing society today (e.g. chastity, purity of heart, respect for the dignity of the human person, sanctity of marriage and the purpose of human sexuality, pornography, prostitution, incest and child abuse, social living conditions, etc.). [CCC nos. 2196-2257; 2258-2330]

ML1.3: Summarize the moral teachings of the Church with regard to particular life issues (e.g. marriage, sexuality, cloning, abortion, genocide, euthanasia) and the social order (e.g. use of technology, economic injustices, environment). [CCC nos. 2032-2040]

ML1.4: Define the term “Magisterium” as applied to Church (consists of the Bishops of the ordinary and universal Church with the Pope as its head; has the soul responsibility for interpretation of God’s Word as revealed in Scripture and Traditions) and define its role in the Moral life of the Church. [CCC nos. 84-100; 1113-1134; 2030-2051]

ML2.1: Describe and distinguish between the objective source from which moral judgement in our lives originates; the divine and natural law (the indwelling of God’s law in our conscience); and the personal subjective judgement of our conscience (i.e. moral choice to act in a particular situation).

ML2.2: Describe through the use of example, how making moral choices promotes a life of virtue. [CCC nos. 1776-1829]

ML2.3: Use examples to describe situations and attitudes which make moral judgements of conscience less clear and certain, thus making our moral decisions very difficult and open to error (e.g. passions, ignorance or disregard for the Moral Law, lack of charity, bad example of others, habit of sin, and rejection of the Church’s authority and teaching). [CCC nos. 1790-1794]

ML3.1: Identify scripture passages (Old Testament and the New Testament) which explain the virtues (i.e. Isaiah, Wisdom Literature, Psalms, Parables, Beatitudes) and apply several of the passages from Proverbs and the Book of Wisdom to situation youth encounter. [CCC nos. 1803-1845]

ML3.2: Identify and describe the cardinal and theological virtues identified by the Church; explain how they are acquired and give examples of how they assist us in the Christian life. [CCC no. 1803-1832]

ML3.3: Distinguish between the human and theological virtues, and provide examples of how they work inter-dependently in the events of everyday life to guide our behaviour toward the performance of good acts in our search for holiness. [CCC nos. 1803-1845]

# Grade 7: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- God has chosen the Church to be an instrument to build up the reign of God on earth.
- Through the Precepts of the Church, Sunday Eucharist and spiritual counsel, the Church encourages the faithful to be obedient to God's command that we keep the Lord's Day holy.

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Holy Spirit has inspired saints throughout the history of the Church to live lives of holiness and justice.
- The Christian Community is inspired to hope by stories of faith in Sacred Scripture and Church Tradition.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Understand that belonging to the community of the Church involves responsibilities of faith (belief and worship) and of Christian living (solidarity and moral life). [CCC nos. 2084-2257]

LC2: Understand how the Church has relied on the intercession of the communion of saints. [CCC nos. 946-975; 2683-2684]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Identify how the Church has promoted the Fourth Commandment (Honour your father and mother) by the witness of solidarity with society, promoting issues of social justice and its social teaching. [CCC nos. 2197-2257]

LC1.2: Identify ways the Church has tried to encourage its members to willingly follow the Third Commandment - keep holy the Lord's day (established the precepts of the Catholic Church - Sunday established as a holy day of obligation and of rest and leisure for the cultivation of families, and cultural, social and religious beliefs; sacramental celebration of the Lord's resurrection each Sunday; counseling against hindering another's observance of the Lord's day). CCC nos. 2168-2195]

LC1.3: Describe ways in which the First and Second Commandments promote in the Church the virtues of faith, hope and charity, the practice of religion, and the freedom of religious expression. [CCC nos. 2084-2167]

LC2.1: Describe the varied spiritualities and prayers that have developed in the Church as a result of the particular charism or witness of a saint (e.g. patron saint, specific devotion to the poor, specific devotion to the sacraments i.e. Eucharist, devotion to Mary). [CCC nos. 2683-2684]

LC2.2: Using particular saints as examples, outline the process of how a person becomes recognized as a saint (i.e. holy man or woman) by the Church. [CCC nos. 946-975]

LC2.3: Identify living examples of the virtuous life (prophets, Mother Teresa, Canadian Martyrs, Jean Vanier, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, St. Peter the Aleut) and explain how they witness to the resurrected Christ through healings and miracles. [CCC nos. 946-975]

# Grade 7: Living in Solidarity

## **Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

### **Big Ideas:**

- Promoting the communal character of the human person is essential to ensuring their proper development and allowing them to achieve their full potential as human beings.
- Life as vocation means being other-centered, faithful, service-oriented, life-giving, respectful, open to God's will.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Through the sacraments, God bestows the gift of Grace that sustains a life of faithful solidarity with and service to the people of the world.
- The principle of solidarity means that we are basically responsible for each other. It involves a commitment to work for justice so that all people in the world will be able to reach their full potential and is thus a global responsibility.
- Not only individuals but political and social institutions are to live in solidarity with the people they serve by overcoming injustice (sinful inequalities) and working to bring about peace.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS3**

Our mission is to evangelize (i.e. proclaim the Gospel message) and to witness to Jesus Christ [CCC nos. 748-870]

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Holy Spirit is active in and through the Church, in the lives of all people of good will regardless of their religion, culture or ethnicity.
- God has placed the desire for God in the human heart and calls all people to God.
- People of various Christian churches and other religious faith traditions share a desire to deepen their relationship with God the Creator of all.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Understand that through the sacraments of service we receive the gift of grace to live our vocations as Catholic Christians for the benefit of society and the world. [CCC nos. 1285-1321; 1533-1600; 1601-1666]

LS2: Focus: Principle of Human Solidarity

Understand that the principle of human solidarity is a Christian social virtue which promotes the individual and communal sharing of material and spiritual goods, and obligates us to seek individual and communal conversion. [CCC nos. 1928-1948]

LS3: Understand that as Christians we can enter into dialogue with the world's major religions concerning common elements (i.e. sacred space – places of worship, rituals, prayers, symbols and beliefs). [CCC nos. 836-856; 1077-1083]

### ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Identify scriptural passages that provide the basis for the Church's teaching on the sacraments of service (Marriage and Holy Orders) and explain how each is a source of grace for the transformation and renewal in the Church and society (e.g. Ephesians 4:11-15; John 16:12-1; Matthew 3:11-15; Matthew 28:18-20; John 1:32-33; Acts 2:38-39; John 6:47-59; Jn. 3:3-6; Rom. 8:14-17). [CCC nos. 1533-1600; 1601-1666]

LS1.2: Identify the prayers, symbols and ritual actions of the sacraments of Confirmation, Holy Orders and Marriage and explain how each is a source of Grace for a life of service to the world. [CCC nos. 1285-1321; 1533-1600; 1601-1666]

LS1.3: Explain what the sacraments of service (Holy Orders and Matrimony) teach us about the social nature of the human person and reflect on how approaching our life as vocation benefits others. [CCC nos. 1533-1600; 1601-1666]

LS2.1: Link the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes to how we are called to "friendship" or "social charity" with people of different nationality, race, ethnicity, economic status or ideologies/faith and explain why this involves individual and communal conversion (i.e. grace / Holy Spirit). [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Describe the forms of solidarity which can effectively address socio-economic problems (i.e. poor among themselves, between rich and poor, among workers, employers and employees, etc.) and explain through example how these forms of solidarity can promote social change (communal conversion of society) and respect for the common good. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Describe the ways that the "principle of solidarity" is manifested by the distribution of goods (i.e. food, clean water, shelter, and basic necessities) and the remuneration for work (i.e. just wage, working conditions, etc.) in the local and global communities. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS3.1: Explain the important relationship of the Church to the Jewish People (i.e. Old Testament Covenant, Commandments, Prophets, Psalms, liturgical prayers, symbols, etc.). [CCC nos. 839-840; 1077-1083]

LS3.2: Examine some of the major religions of world (i.e. Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu) to identify the common elements that can be found in each (e.g. places of worship, ritual and prayers, symbols and a set of beliefs) and relate this to the human quest for God. [CCC nos. 839-845]

# Grade 7: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God through his example (i.e. seeking solitude, humility and confidence, praying from the heart) and by teaching them the Lord's Prayer (the Our Father).
- Prayer is central to the spiritual life of all Christians in order to grow in holiness, for moral and spiritual development and for all pastoral ministry of service.
- The first teachings of the Sermon on the Mount point to the need for conversion of heart before we pray to our Father – we are to be beatitude people, to imitate the life of Jesus in fellowship and be in communion with Christ and others.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer: Forms and Expressions of Prayer*

### **Big Ideas:**

- Prayer has many forms and expressions found in Scripture and Tradition – blessing and adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise, vocal, meditative, and contemplative.
- The Church has drawn upon many sources to assist Christians in prayer (i.e. Liturgy of the Hours, the Liturgy of the Word and Eucharist).

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Explain why the Church believes the “Our Father” is a “summary of the whole Gospel”. [CCC nos. 2759-2776]

PR2: Understand that the various forms of prayer have their origin in scripture and are expressed in the Church's tradition of communal prayer. [CCC nos. 1174-1178; 2623-2649]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Explain why the “Our Father” has become the prayer of the Church, prayed in the ritual celebration of each sacrament and in the Eucharistic Liturgy. [CCC nos. 2767-2776]

PR1.2: Identify the four-fold structure of the Sermon on the Mount (first, teaching on the Kingdom and the characteristics of discipleship – Beatitudes/Salt and Light; second, the letter of the law vs. the spirit of the law; third, illustrations of a truly spiritual man/the Our Father/how to pray, give alms, fast; fourth, dangerous tendencies/earthly wealth vs. heavenly goals/worry and fear) and show how the Sermon links the petitions in the Our

Father to the Beatitudes and the moral teachings of the other three sections. (The first and second parts summarize Christ’s moral teaching – what we are to “be”. The third which contains the Our Father, teaches us how to “have” a spiritual life filled with God’s grace, and the fourth points to the purpose of life – the Reign of God. This proximity links prayer, spirituality and moral actions in our lives – the need to seek and ask for the guidance and assistance of God the Father, in order to live the Christian life as reflected in moral teaching and prayer.)

PR1.3: Explain why the Sermon on the Mount and the Our Father are at the centre of the Gospels (e.g. they are the summary of all of Jesus’ ethical and spiritual teachings on prayer and both point to the end times and the promise of the kingdom. The message of the Sermon points to the need for conversion, an attitude of humility and supplication before God, acts of faith, hope and charity, and above all, a spiritual life of prayer). [CCC nos. 2607-2615; 2761-2764]

PR1.4: Examine and compare the version of the “Our Father” in the gospels of Matthew and Luke and explain why it is considered an ecumenical prayer among Christians (i.e. final doxology). [CCC nos. 2855-2865]

PR2.1: Examine the Scripture to identify the importance of giving praise to God at all times Psalm 119:164; Psalm 1:2; Exodus 29:38-46; Ephes. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 2:15, 3:1; Acts 10:3, 9, 13, 19; Acts 16:25. [CCC nos. 1174-1178]

PR2.2: Identify the various forms of prayer (i.e. blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise) found in the Psalms, prayers and some of the “specific hours” of the Liturgy of the Hours. [CCC nos. 1174-1178; 2623-2649]

PR2.3: Outline the structure of the Christian Liturgy of the Hours (i.e. Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, Divine Office, Mid-day Prayer, and Night Prayer) and the reasons for the commitment made by religious, deacons, priests and laity to pray this Prayer. [CCC nos. 1174-1178]

# Grade 8: Believing

## **Fundamental Concept: BL1**

God's Self-Revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture and Tradition

### **Big Ideas:**

- God is revealed through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, which is authoritatively interpreted by the Magisterium (teaching authority of the Church; the bishops in union with the Pope). [CCC nos. 100, 137]
- In the New Testament, Jesus the Messiah fulfills the Covenant of the Old Testament.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL2**

The Creed as a Summary of Catholic Belief and a Profession of Faith

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Holy Spirit and Jesus are inseparable and are one with God the Father.
- Holy Spirit reveals and ensures the presence of Christ in the Church on earth and the ongoing experience of the divine in the world.
- The Holy Spirit revealed by the Father and the Son, pours out God's grace on the Church for our salvation and for the salvation of the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: BL3**

In God's Plan of Salvation Christ founded the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is One in its profession of faith (i.e. Creed), in its common celebration of worship (i.e. Sacraments) and united in its teaching through apostolic succession (i.e. Pope and Bishops - Magisterium).
- The Church is Holy because Christ is its Head, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies its life (i.e. grace, sacraments, and people set aside for holy works e.g. saints).
- The Church is Catholic (i.e. universal) because Christ revealed that God's salvation is for all people, and thus her mission is to spread the message of the Gospel to the world and bring all people into communion with God through Christ.
- The Church is Apostolic because Christ handed on to the apostles and their successors (i.e. Pope and Bishops) his ministry of teaching, sanctification and of governance of the Church.
- The mission of the Church involves Christ's Faithful – Clergy, Laity, and Consecrated Life (i.e. Religious).

## ***Overall Expectations***

BL1: Demonstrate an understanding of how the Church approaches the interpretation of scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. [CCC nos. 51-141]

BL2: Demonstrate an understanding of the Church's teaching on the role of the Holy Spirit, the mission of the Son, and the continued presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. [CCC nos. 683-747]

BL 3: Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of the four marks of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic and how these four marks are lived out in the life of the Church. [CCC nos. 811-945]

## ***Specific Expectations***

BL1.1: Describe the "four senses of scripture" that assist the Church in understanding scripture (i.e. literal, spiritual, allegorical, moral and analogical) and apply each to an examination of a selection of Scripture passages (e.g. Gen. 3 - the promise of redemption; Genesis 12:1-3 - Abraham; Exodus 11:1-9; 12:21-27 – Moses; 2 Samuel 7:4-6, 18 – David; Isaiah 55:3, 10-11 - Prophets; Luke 1:26-38 - Annunciation and Incarnation, etc.). [CCC nos. 51-141]

BL1.2: Explain the theological connection between the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament (Christ fulfills the promise of the Covenant) and distinguish between the three stages of formation of the gospels (the life and teaching of Jesus, the oral tradition and the written gospels). [CCC nos. 120-130]

BL1.3: Describe the Church's understanding of the relationship between reason and faith, human intelligence and wisdom, and the role of the Holy Spirit in understanding and interpreting God's plan of salvation (e.g. creation, the nature of man, etc.). [CCC nos. 51-141; 279-421]

BL2.1: Identify in the Old Testament evidence of the active presence of the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit is portrayed at the moment of creation and in the lives of God's Chosen People (e.g. Gen. 1:2; Numbers 11:25-26; Exod. 31:3; Isaiah 11:1-2, 30:1, 44:4-5, 61:1-2, 63:7-14; 1 Samuel 16:13-14; Micah 3:8; Ps. 33:6, 139:7, 143:10). [CCC nos. 702-710]

BL2.2: Using passages from the New Testament as evidence explain the significance and role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ and outline how this inseparable union of Christ and Spirit is found in the life of the Church. [CCC nos. 711-747]

BL2.3: Identify and explain the meaning of the names, titles and symbols of the Holy Spirit to describe the Church's understanding of the Spirit's Mission. [CCC nos. 683-701]

BL 3.1: Examine selected passages from the New Testament to identify and summarize God's plan for the unity (Eph. 4:4-5; 1 Cor. 10:17; John 10:16), the holiness (Eph. 5:25-27;

1 Tim. 1:15), the universality/catholicity (Col. 1:5-6) and apostolic mark (John 6:70; Heb. 5:4; Titus 1:5-9) of the Church. [CCC nos. 811-945]

BL3.2: Name the four marks of the Church and summarize what they express about the nature of the Church (e.g. One – one profession of faith, common celebrations of worship, apostolic succession through Holy Orders; Holy – Christ as its head, the communion of saints; Catholic – bears the full Truth in Christ, its mission is to the world; Apostolic – built on the foundations of the Apostles, hands on the teachings of the Apostles, guided by the successors of the Apostles, the bishops in union with the Pope). [CCC nos. 811-945]

BL3.3: Connect the four marks of the Church (One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic) to the daily life of their local Church (e.g. World Day of Prayer celebrations, liturgical celebration of the Saints, Christian community service to all, missionary work in countries around the world). [CCC nos. 811-945]

# Grade 8: Celebrating

## **Fundamental Concept: CL1**

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Sacraments of the Church have their roots in Scripture i.e. the ministry which Christ handed on to the Church through the apostles.
- Through the sacramental action of the priest i.e. words and symbols, in the celebrations of the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Spirit pours out the Grace of God to sustain us in living a holy and virtuous life.
- Through the Sacraments of Initiation the baptized become members of the Body of Christ and are strengthened in their witness of Christ, in forming the community of the Church and in the participation of its mission in the world.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL2**

The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life.
- Through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Mass we encounter Christ's presence in Word i.e. Scripture proclaimed, in the assembled community i.e. Church - Body of Christ, in the priest i.e. Head and Shepherd, and under the sign of bread and wine i.e. sacramental presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.
- The celebration of the Eucharist (i.e. Mass) invites us to full, active participation in the mystery we celebrate so we can receive and experience the many graces that come from this sacrament of love.

## **Fundamental Concept: CL3**

The Celebrations of the Church's Liturgical Year

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Liturgical Year of the Church celebrates God's plan of salvation revealed in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus i.e. Paschal Mystery.
- The Church maintains its unity while celebrating diversity within its liturgical traditions (rites).

## ***Overall Expectations***

CL1: Focus: Confirmation

Understand that the Sacraments strengthen, sanctify and sustain our life of witness to Christ in the Church and the world. [CCC nos. 1285-1321]

CL2: Understand the Eucharist as the Sacrament that completes Initiation and is the source and summit of Christian life. [CCC nos. 1322-1327; 1402-1419]

CL3: Understand that the Church in celebrating the Liturgy and the Sacraments participates in the work of the Holy Trinity. [CCC nos. 1077-1209]

### ***Specific Expectations***

CL1.1: Connect the actions of the Holy Spirit revealed at Pentecost in the early Church with the effects of the sacrament of Confirmation (the perfection of baptismal grace, the help of the Holy Spirit's gifts and fruits, indelible mark, call to spread and defend the faith, stewardship). [CCC nos.1285; 1295-1296; 1302-1305; 1315-1317]

CL1.2: Identify in the Rite of Confirmation – requirements for the reception, the minister, the signs and rituals (*laying on of hands, anointing with chrism*) and what they symbolize and impart on the receiver, and explain how this sacrament reveals the Holy Spirit as one who gathers and forms the Church for service in the world. [CCC nos. 1293-1301; 1306-1314]

CL1.3: Identify and examine a selection of scripture passages from the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament to link the Sacrament of Confirmation to its source in Sacred Scripture (Is. 11:2; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 9:5-6; Acts 13:2-3; Luke 4:16-21; John 8:12; Matt. 5:14-16; Cor. 1:21-22; I Sam. 10:10-12; I Sam. 16:13) and outline its historical development within the Tradition of the Church (East and West). [CCC nos. 1285-1286; 1290-1292]

CL2.1: Analyse the life of the early Church (Acts, Letters of Paul) and its Tradition to see the central role that the Eucharist has played in the life and witness of the Church.

CL2.2: Identify the significance of the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist in addition to the present and future realities that Christians hope to receive through their participation in the Eucharist (e.g. immediate union with Christ, nourishment for our spiritual life, separation from sin, preservation from mortal sin, strength in our unity with the Church and our commitment to the poor, and Christ's promise of the glory to come). [CCC nos. 1391-1405]

CL2.3: Explain the role and importance of the Sacraments of Initiation and connect them to the Church's understanding of the Mass is the source and summit of Christian life. [CCC nos. 1322, 1407]

CL3.1: Chart how the Church's Liturgical seasons unfold the mysteries of faith professed in the Creed through the celebration of certain Feasts and Solemnities (i.e. Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection, Exaltation of the Cross, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, etc.). [CCC nos. 2030; 946-962]

CL3.2: Describe the diversity of liturgical traditions within the Catholic Church (i.e. Rites) and explain through example how the Church maintains its catholicity (unity in diversity) while purifying and integrating into the liturgies the authentic riches of cultures. (The

liturgies from both traditions signify and communicate the same mysteries of Christ.)  
[CCC nos. 1200-1209]

CL3.3: Compare the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Rite to that of the Byzantine Rite to identify similarities and differences that reflect the influence of culture on the liturgies of the Church and the dates devoted to the primary feasts and holy days of the Church.

# Grade 8: Living a Moral Life

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| <b>Fundamental Concept: ML1</b><br>Christian Morality as a living response of our human vocation to life in the Spirit as revealed by reason, the Scriptures and Tradition   |
| <b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, particularly the Beatitudes and the Tradition are sources of instruction for moral conduct i.e. for living the Christian life.</li><li>➤ By living a Christian moral life, we give witness within the Church and society to Jesus Christ.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Fundamental Concept: ML2</b><br>Freedom and Responsibility, Reason, Conscience, and Conscience Formation  |
| <b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Through our conscience and the judgement of reason aided by faith, we can judge the morality of our actions.</li><li>➤ Because Sacred Scripture contains the Word of God, and thus objective Truth, it is an important tool for forming human conscience.</li><li>➤ The Church’s Magisterium (i.e. Pope / Bishops) can assist us in developing an informed conscience in order to live a moral life.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Fundamental Concept: ML3</b><br>Grace, Virtue, Holiness and Sin and Forgiveness   |
| <b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ God assists us in living the Christian life through grace which we can merit by the way we live our lives.</li><li>➤ Sin can only be overcome by first acknowledging our need and asking for God’s forgiveness, accepting God’s grace and living in the Holy Spirit.</li><li>➤ The grace of the Holy Spirit that is received through the Sacrament of Confirmation has the power to initiate the “works of justification” to promote a holy and virtuous life.</li></ul> |

## *Overall Expectations*

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of how living the Christian moral life in accordance to the Moral Law (i.e. Natural Moral Law, Ten Commandments, Law of the Gospel) is a witness to the Truth, the Dignity of the Human Person and the building up of the Church and Society. [CCC nos. 1700-1715; 1877-1948; 2012-2051; 2464-2513]

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of the important roles of Scripture (i.e. Word of God, Jesus Christ), the Church (i.e. Teaching Magisterium) and the Holy Spirit in the formation of a healthy (upright) conscience. [CCC nos. 1776-1802]

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding that the grace received through the Holy Spirit calls us to holiness and gives us the gifts we need to be justified in the Christian life (i.e. to manifest the excellent work of God's love). [CCC nos. 1810-1811; 1830-1832; 1987-2029]

### ***Specific Expectations***

ML1.1: Identify and describe the elements of moral life outlined in the Beatitudes and explain how beatitude living gives witness to a life of morality, Christian holiness and the work of the Holy Spirit. [CCC nos. 2012-2029; 2044-2046]

ML1.2: Outline the Church's teaching on the Eighth Commandment (Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour) and provide examples (through drama, cartoon series, story writing/telling) of how we witness to the Truth of this Commandment by applying it to current issues in society or at school (e.g. bearing false witness includes acts of perjury, lying, slander, bragging, rash judgement, gossiping). [CCC nos. 2464-2513]

ML1.3: Using examples of moral dilemmas faced by young people, demonstrate how choosing to live a Christian moral life reflects a witness to God, a respect for personal dignity and promotes the common good for others. [CCC nos. 1700-1715; 2012-2051; 1928-1948]

ML2.1: Describe how the Holy Spirit and the Church's teaching (i.e. Magisterium) form our consciences in assisting us to address the challenging moral situations that face society today. (Bestowed on us in Baptism and strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit assist us in the formation of our conscience). [CCC nos. 1776-1802]

ML2.2: Explain the Church's belief in the objective truth of the Word of God in Sacred Scripture (i.e. God's revelation of salvation, faith and morals) and the important source and role that Sacred Scripture has in the examination and formation of conscience for Christian moral decision-making and daily living. [CCC nos. 1776-1789]

ML2.3: Identify some of the moral situations that have arisen in society as a result of globalization, advances in technology and science and examine them in light of the Church's moral teachings.

ML2.4: Link the need for commitment, turning away from sin, growth in virtue and faith to the process of forming and exercising a healthy (upright) conscience for moral decision-making. [CCC nos. 1776-1789]

ML3.1: Identify New Testament passages that reveal the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus and explain how these events are examples of the power of grace over sin.

(Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4; Jesus drives out demons – Luke 11:14; Matt. 7:21-23; Matt. 12:22-32; the temptations of Jesus – Matt. 4:1-11; Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane – Lk. 22:39-46; the crucifixion of Jesus’ life – Luke 23:26-49; Matt. 27:45-61; John 19:17-37.) [CCC nos. 1810-1811; 1987-2029]

ML3.2: Link the human need for grace to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the fruits they perfect in us, and the merits (spiritual credits granted for good works) we can receive for ourselves and others when we cooperate with this grace. [CCC nos. 1830-1831; 2006-2011]

ML3.3: Identify the ways in which the grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us in our Christian life (to change us from sinfulness to righteousness through grace). [CCC nos. 1987-1995]

# Grade 8: Living in Communion

## **Fundamental Concept: LC1**

Living in the Church as members of the Body of Christ

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Through the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) we are united to Christ and one another in a living faith community that is guided by the Holy Spirit.
- Each person is called to a role of service in the life of the Church community as witnesses to Christ in the world (laity, consecrated religious life, and ordained ministry).

## **Fundamental Concept: LC2**

The Communion of Saints

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Communion of Saints includes all those who have lived lives of virtue and holiness.
- The Holy Spirit was with Jesus in his ministry and has inspired saints throughout the history of the Church to live lives of holiness and justice.
- God provides us with the gifts and talents we need to build the reign of God on earth.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LC1: Demonstrate an understanding of how the Church community supports one's life of faith and how our participation in the Church witnesses to the reign of God. [CCC nos. 702-747]

LC2: Understand how the Holy Spirit through the communion of saints guides, teaches, and inspires the Church to a communion of holiness. [CCC nos. 687-747; 823-829]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LC1.1: Select and use passages from the New Testament to describe the meaning of "Church as community" (e.g. Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:3-13; Matt. 5:13-16; Hebrews 10:24-25; John 15:1-2) and state how the communal nature of the Church witnesses to the reign of God in the world through the Holy Spirit. [CCC nos. 702-732]

LC1.2: Outline requirements of participation in the Church as community (e.g. participation in the Eucharist, a life of prayer, continual faith formation that deepens

understanding of the statements of the Creed, works of service to the poor) and using examples, explain the importance of participation.

LC1.3: Explain giving examples, how the Grace of Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit received through the sacrament of Confirmation, support a life of faith and encourage participation in the life of the Church (e.g. strengthens our communion with Christ, our understanding of Grace, Church fellowship, the will to witnessing to Christ through words and actions, endows new gifts – wisdom, counsel, etc.). [CCC nos. 733-747]

LC2.1: Explain the signs of holiness found within the Church (e.g. teachings, sacraments, witness of love and service) and connect this with the “communion of saints”. [CCC nos. 687-747; 823-829]

LC2.2: Define the gifts and fruits (perfections/virtues) of the Holy Spirit and explain how they are important in guiding our development as people who strive to live a holy life (e.g. find examples of everyday saints who exemplify the virtues). [CCC nos. 687-747]

LC2.3: Identify and interpret stories in the New Testament that demonstrate the significant role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus and his followers (e.g. Luke 1:26-39 – the Annunciation; Luke 4:16-21 – “The spirit of the Lord is Upon me...”; Luke 4:1-2 – Jesus is led into the desert; Acts 2:1-13 – Pentecost; Luke 16:5-15 – The Paraclete; Rom. 5:5 – the Holy Spirit pours out God’s love on the early Church). [CCC nos. 737-747]

# Grade 8: Living in Solidarity

## **Fundamental Concept: LS1**

We are called to live our Christian vocation within the human community (i.e. communal nature of our dignity as human beings)

### **Big Ideas:**

- The principles of social justice have their roots in Sacred Scripture and form the basis for the Social Justice teachings of the Catholic Church.
- The role of civil authority is to promote human dignity and the common good of society.
- Each of us is called by God (vocation) to make a difference in our world through our Catholic Christian witness for the betterment of society and the created world.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS2**

Social Justice Teachings of the Church

### **Big Ideas:**

- Promoting the Church's Social Justice Teachings ensures respect for the human person and the common good of society.
- The Church's Social Justice Teachings promote the proper development and flourishing of the human person, culture and education, the promotion of the common good, democratic societies, and the legitimate exercise of authority through social structures and institutions both at the local and international level.
- The call to conversion is not only individual but communal because of the existence of sinful inequalities within community that are in contradiction to the Gospel.

## **Fundamental Concept: LS3**

Our mission is to evangelize (i.e. proclaim the Gospel message) and to witness to Jesus Christ [CCC nos. 748-870]

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus' mission was to witness to God and the Gospel message of salvation.
- Guided by the Holy Spirit, Christians participate in Christ's mission of evangelization by witnessing to the Gospel message of Truth in their words, actions and deeds of service to all people.
- Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue invites Christians to seek unity, to respect the gift of religious diversity in the search for the Truth and in the articulation of common beliefs, while developing an attitude of respect for religious differences and the openness and desire to seek communion.

## ***Overall Expectations***

LS1: Understand that the principle of human dignity, revealed in Scripture (i.e. the belief that the human person is made in the image and likeness of God) requires Christians to work for the common good of all people (i.e. respect for the social nature of the human person) and to participate in society. [CCC nos. 1877-1885]

LS2: Focus: Principle of Rights and Responsibilities

Understand that the principles of responsibility and participation in society are Christian social virtues, which call us to roles of leadership, to evangelize through our witness of the Gospel and through the promotion of social justice in the world. [CCC nos. 1877-1948]

LS3: Demonstrate an understanding of the mission of the Church as animated by the Holy Spirit and focused on sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with all people of the earth. [CCC nos. 830-856]

## ***Specific Expectations***

LS1.1: Connect the principle of the ‘Common Good’ to its biblical source (Isaiah 10:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-7, 12; Matt. 25:35-40; Acts 2:44-45; Gal. 5:22-25; 1 John 4:7-10; John 10:11-18; Deuteronomy 30:19; Nehemiah 2:17-18) and relate the message of the scripture to Catholic social teachings found in several ecclesial sources (e.g. excerpts from Papal Encyclicals, Apostolic Letters and exhortations, Bishops’ pastoral letters or documents on social justice).

LS1.2: Examine the political initiatives presently being promoted at various levels of civil society (city, provincial, federal) and critique how well each promotes the dignity of the human person and the *Common Good* as it is defined in Sacred Scripture and Catholic social teaching. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS1.3: Recognize signs of the growing human interdependence of the global community and identify ways it is challenging Catholic organizations and individuals in their mission of promoting social justice principles.

LS1.4: Articulate the three essential elements of the *Common Good* (i.e. respect for the fundamental rights of the person; prosperity and the development of the spiritual and temporal goods of society; peace and security of societies and nations) and link them to ecological justice and the universal common good of protecting the earth’s resources for future generations. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.1: Identify and examine scripture passages in the New Testament where Jesus invites “inner conversion” of those who exercise roles of authority (i.e. Pharisees, civil officials, tax collectors, etc.) as an ethical obligation to address the social structures of sin, and apply this principle of a need for inner conversion to examples in our present society that call for our active participation in promoting the common good. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.2: Summarize the key principles of Catholic social justice and link them to the primary Christian values of love, promotion of life, reconciliation, inclusion, compassion, fidelity, liberation, community and hope. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS2.3: Define the Church's social teaching with respect to personal responsibility (i.e. care of family and their education, conscientious work, etc.) and participation in public life (i.e. leadership, politics, culture, etc.) and give examples of how each promotes the good of individuals and the common good of society. [CCC nos. 356-384; 1928-1933; 1391-1401]

LS3.1: Examine a selection of scripture passages to identify the nature of Jesus' mission and the role of the Holy Spirit in the mission of Jesus and of the Church (Lk. 4:14-30; Jn. 20:21; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 13:14; Matt. 28:19).

LS3.2: Outline the basic principles that guide the Church's participation in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue (seek unity, respect the gift of religious diversity in the search for the Truth and in the articulation of common beliefs, respect religious differences, be open and desire to seek communion).

LS3.3: Identify and describe some of the efforts the Church has made to continue Christ's mission to spread the Good News to all people of the world (e.g. working with people from other religions on issues of social justice as a means to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ; witnessing to Christ through our work with those in need; participating in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue). [CCC nos. 830-856]

# Grade 8: Praying

## **Fundamental Concept: PR1**

God's universal call to prayer and our human response

### **Big Ideas:**

- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God through his example (i.e. seeking solitude, humility and confidence, praying from the heart) and by teaching them the Lord's Prayer (the Our Father).
- Jesus turned to his Father through prayers of praise and petition during his life and is the perfect model of a life of prayer.
- The Our Father is a prayer of faith, hope and charity; it models how and for what we are to petition the Father.

## **Fundamental Concept: PR2**

*The Way of Prayer*: Forms and Expressions of Prayer

### **Big Ideas:**

- The Way of Prayer is through Jesus the one and only Mediator in the power of the Holy Spirit to God the Father i.e. Trinitarian focus.
- The life of prayer requires the development of habits which reflect the spirit and example of Jesus' life of prayer.
- The Church, through the example of the saints, provides models of a life of prayer.

## ***Overall Expectations***

PR1: Understand the seven petitions of the Our Father as the prayer for our journey of faith. [CCC nos. 2777-2865]

PR2: Understand how one develops the habits of prayer according to the spirit and example of Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 2565, 2655; 2663-2672; 2725-2745]

## ***Specific Expectations***

PR1.1: Identify how a Life of Prayer involves the theological virtues (i.e. faith, hope, and love) and how these are expressed in the Our Father as a prayer. [CCC nos. 2607-2615; 2777-2802]

PR1.2: Examine the "Seven Petitions" of the Our Father and explain how they express different aspects of our faith in God and how they might influence our daily encounter with God and others. [CCC nos. 2803-2854]

PR1.3: Identify biblical passages in the New Testament in which Jesus teaches the disciples through word and act how to pray (Matthew 6:5-15, 14:23, 26:36-46; Mark 1:35,

6:46, 14:32-40; Luke 3:21-22, 5:16, 6:12-13, 9:18, 28-29, 11:1, 22:31-32, 39-46, 23:34; John 6:15; Hebrews 5:7) and explain what these passages reveal about his relationship with his Father and how we are to pray. [CCC nos. 2761-2766]

PR2.1: Understand that all Christian prayer is directed through Jesus to the Father in the Holy Spirit and that in praying we profess belief in the Trinity). [CCC nos. 2663-2672]

PR2.2: Identify how the profession of faith which we make in the Apostles Creed and Nicene Creed not only deepen our understanding of the central beliefs of the Church but are essential for a life of prayer. [CCC nos. 2565, 2655]

PR2.3: Identify things which undermine the development of a life of prayer (e.g. lack of faith, distraction, not wanting to make the effort, cultural and social influences, lack of experience and a praying community) and explain how these have been addressed in the Tradition of the Church (i.e. examples of saints). [CCC nos. 2725-2745]

## 7. Glossary of Terms

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The following definitions have been modified from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website and are linked to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. For a complete version of this glossary visit: <http://old.usccb.org/catechism/text/glossary.shtml>

**ABSOLUTION:** An essential element of the Sacrament of Penance in which the priest, by the power entrusted to the Church by Christ, pardons the sin(s) of the penitent (1424, 1442, 1449, 1453, 1480).

**ADORATION:** The acknowledgment of God as God, Creator and Saviour, the Lord and Master of everything that exists. Through worship and prayer, the Church and individual persons give to God the adoration which is the first act of the virtue of religion. The first commandment of the law obliges us to adore God (2096, 2628; cf. 1083).

**ALMSGIVING:** Giving to the poor as an act of penance or fraternal charity. Almsgiving, together with prayer and fasting, are traditionally recommended to foster the state of interior penance (1434; cf. 1969, 2447).

**ALTAR:** The centre and focal point of a church, where the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is made present under sacramental signs in the Mass. (1182, 1383).

**ANGEL:** A spiritual, personal, and immortal creature, with intelligence and free will, who glorifies God without ceasing and who serves God as a messenger of his saving plan (329-331).

**ANNUNCIATION:** The visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to inform her that she was to be the mother of the Saviour. After giving her consent to God's word, Mary became the mother of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit (484, 494).

**ANOINTING:** A symbol of the Holy Spirit, whose "anointing" of Jesus as Messiah fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. Christ (in Hebrew *Messiah*) means the one "anointed" by the Holy Spirit. Anointing is the sacramental sign of Confirmation, called Chrismation in the Churches of the East. Anointing forms part of the liturgical rites of the catechumenate, and of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Orders (695).

**ANOINTING OF THE SICK:** One of the seven sacraments, also known as the "sacrament of the dying," administered by a priest to a baptized person in danger of death because of illness or old age, through prayer and the anointing of the body with the oil of the sick. The proper effects of the sacrament include a special grace of healing and comfort to the Christian who is suffering the infirmities of serious illness or old age, and the forgiving of the person's sins (1499, 1520, 1523, 1526-1532).

**APOSTLE:** one *sent* as Jesus sent his chosen disciples to preach the Gospel to the whole world. He called the Twelve to become his Apostles, chosen to witness his Resurrection and be the foundation of the Church (857).

**APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION:** The handing on of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles to their successors the bishops through the laying on of hands, as a permanent office in the Church (77, 861).

**ASCENSION:** The entry of Jesus' humanity into divine glory in God's heavenly domain, forty days after his Resurrection (659, 665).

**ASSUMPTION:** The Blessed Virgin Mary's singular participation in her Son's Resurrection by which she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when the course of her earthly life was finished (966).

**BAPTISM:** Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist constitute the "sacraments of initiation" by which a believer receives the remission of original and personal sin, begins a new life in which he/she is united with Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ (977, 1213 ff.; 1275, 1278).

**BEATITUDES:** The teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount on the meaning and way to true happiness (cf. *Mt 5:1-12; Lk 6:20-23*). These teachings reflect the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham; they portray the countenance of Christ and describe his charity. Moreover, by shedding light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life, they describe the vocation of all the faithful (1024, 1716, 1721).

**BIBLICAL INSPIRATION:** The gift of the Holy Spirit which assisted a human author to write a biblical book so that it has God as its author and teaches faithfully, without error, the saving truth that God has willed to be consigned to us (105).

**BISHOP:** One who has received the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which makes him a member of the Episcopal college and a successor of the Apostles. He is the shepherd of a particular church entrusted to him (1557; cf. 861, 886).

**BLESSED SACRAMENT:** A name given to the Holy Eucharist, especially the consecrated elements reserved in the tabernacle for adoration, or for the sick (1330).

**BODY OF CHRIST:** (1) The human body which the Son of God assumed through his conception in the womb of Mary and which is now glorified in heaven (467, 476, 645). (2) This same Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ are sacramentally present in the Eucharist under the appearances of bread and wine (1374). (3) The Church is called the (mystical) Body of Christ because of the intimate communion which Jesus shares with his disciples; the metaphor of a body, whose head is Christ and whose members are the faithful, provides an image which keeps in focus both the unity and the diversity of the Church (787, 790, 1396).

**CANON OF SCRIPTURE:** The Church's complete list of sacred books of the Bible (120).

**CANONIZATION:** The solemn declaration by the Pope that a deceased member of the faithful may be proposed as a model and intercessor to the Christian faithful and venerated as a saint on the basis of the fact that the person lived a life of heroic virtue or remained faithful to God through martyrdom (828; cf. 957).

**CARDINAL VIRTUES:** Four pivotal human virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith (1805, 1834).

**CATECHESIS:** An education of children, young people, and adults in the faith of the Church through the teaching of Christian doctrine in an organic and systematic way to make them disciples of Jesus Christ. Those who perform the ministry of catechists in the Church are called "catechists" (5, 426-427).

**CATHOLIC:** One of the four marks or notes of the Church, taken from the Nicene Creed. The Church is catholic or universal both because she possesses the fullness of Christ's presence and the means of salvation, and because she has been sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race (750, 830).

**CATHOLIC CHURCH:** The Church established by Christ on the foundation of the Apostles, possessing the fullness of the means of salvation which he has willed: correct and complete confession of faith, full sacramental life, and ordained ministry in apostolic succession (830).

**CHARACTER, SACRAMENTAL:** An indelible spiritual mark which is the permanent effect of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, by which a person is given a new permanent configuration to Christ and a specific standing in the Church; the reception of these sacraments is never repeated (1272, 1304, 1582).

**CHARISM:** A specific gift or grace of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefits the Church, given in order to help a person live out the Christian life, or to serve the common good in building up the Church (799, 951).

**CHARITY:** The theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God (1822).

**CHASTITY:** The moral virtue which, under the cardinal virtue of temperance, provides for the successful integration of sexuality within the person leading to the inner unity of the bodily and spiritual being (2337). Chastity is called one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (1832).

**CHURCH:** The name given the "convocation" or "assembly" of the People God has called together from "the ends of the earth." In Christian usage, the word "Church" has three inseparable meanings: the People that God gathers in the whole world; the particular or local church (diocese); and the liturgical (above all Eucharistic) assembly. The Church draws her life from the Word and the Body of Christ, and so herself becomes Christ's Body (752). In the Creed, the sole Church of Christ is professed to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic (811).

**CONFESSION:** An essential element of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, which consists in telling one's sins to the priestly minister. By extension, the word confession is used to refer to the Sacrament of Penance itself (1455).

**CONFIRMATION:** One of the ensemble of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Church, together with Baptism and Eucharist. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or "confirm" the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church (1285).

**CONSCIENCE:** The interior voice of a human being, within whose heart the inner law of God is inscribed. Moral conscience is a judgement of practical reason about the moral quality of a human action. It moves a person at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil (1777-1778). An *examination of conscience* is recommended as a preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance (1454).

**CONSECRATED LIFE:** A permanent state of life recognized by the Church, entered freely in response to the call of Christ to perfection, and characterized by the profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience (914).

**CONSECRATED VIRGINS:** Women who have decided with the Church's approval to cling only to the Lord and to live in a state of virginity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" and are consecrated in that state by a solemn rite (922-924).

**CONSECRATION:** The dedication of a thing or person to divine service by a prayer or blessing. The consecration at Mass is that part of the Eucharistic Prayer during which the Lord's words of institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper are recited by the priestly minister, making Christ's Body and Blood--his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all--sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine (1352, 1353).

**CONTEMPLATION:** A form of wordless prayer in which mind and heart focus on God's greatness and goodness in affective, loving adoration; to look on Jesus and the mysteries of his life with faith and love (2628, 2715).

**CONTRITION:** Sorrow of the soul and hatred for the sin committed, together with a resolution not to sin again. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent, and is necessary for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance (1451).

**CONVERSION:** A radical reorientation of the whole life away from sin and evil, and toward God. This change of heart or conversion is a central element of Christ's preaching, of the Church's ministry of evangelization, and of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (1427, 1431, 1423; cf. 821).

**COVENANT:** A solemn agreement between human beings or between God and a human being involving mutual commitments or guarantees. The Bible refers to God's covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Moses as leader of the chosen people, Israel. In the *Old Testament or Covenant*, God revealed his law through Moses and prepared his people for salvation through the prophets. In the *New Testament or Covenant*, Christ established a new and eternal covenant through his own sacrificial death and Resurrection; no new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ (56, 62, 66).

**CREED:** A brief, normative summary statement or profession of Christian faith, e.g., the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed. (187).

**DEACON, DIACONATE:** A third degree of the hierarchy of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, after bishop and priest. The deacon is ordained not to priesthood but for ministry and service. Deacons are ordained to assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the divine mysteries, above all the Eucharist, in the distribution of Holy Communion, in assisting at and blessing marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel and preaching, in presiding over funerals, and in dedicating themselves to the various ministries of charity. While the Churches of the East have always had a functioning order of deacons, in the West the permanent diaconate was re-established by the Second Vatican Council (1569, 1571).

**DECALOGUE:** The Ten Commandments (literally, "ten words") given by God to Moses on Sinai. In order to be faithful to the teaching of Jesus, the Decalogue must be interpreted in the light of the great commandment of love of God and neighbour (2055, 2056).

**DEPOSIT OF FAITH:** The heritage of faith contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, handed on in the Church from the time of the Apostles, from which the Magisterium draws all that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed (84; cf. 1202).

**DESCENT INTO HELL:** An article in the Apostles' Creed referring to the victory over death and sin which Christ won by being "raised from the dead." Jesus, like all people, experienced death and in his soul joined the others in the realm of the dead, where he descended as Saviour, proclaiming the Gospel to the spirits imprisoned there in order to free the just ones who had gone before him (632).

**DEVELOPMENT, DOCTRINAL:** Growth in the understanding of God's revelation, which continues through the contemplation and study of believers, theological research, and the preaching of the Magisterium (94).

**DISCIPLE:** Those who accepted Jesus' message to follow him are called his disciples. Jesus associated his disciples with his own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to the disciples and gave them a share in his mission, his joy, and his sufferings (767, 787).

**DIVINE OFFICE:** *The Liturgy of the Hours*, the public prayer of the Church which sanctifies the whole course of the day and night. Christ thus continues his priestly work through the prayer of his priestly people (1174).

**DOCTRINE/DOGMA:** The revealed teachings of Christ which are proclaimed by the fullest extent of the exercise of the authority of the Church's Magisterium. The faithful are obliged to believe the truths or dogmas contained in divine Revelation and defined by the Magisterium (88).

**DOXOLOGY:** Christian prayer which gives praise and glory to God, often in a special way to the three divine persons of the Trinity. Liturgical prayers traditionally conclude with the doxology "to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit"; the final doxology of the Lord's Prayer renews the prayer's first three petitions in the form of adoration and praise (2639, 2855).

**EASTERN CHURCHES:** Churches of the East in union with Rome (the Western Church), but not of Roman rite, with their own liturgical, theological, and administrative traditions, such as those of the Byzantine, Alexandrian or Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Maronite, and Chaldean rites. The variety of particular churches with distinctive traditions witnesses to the catholicity of the one Church of Christ, which takes root in distinct cultures (1202-1203; cf. 835).

**ECONOMY OF SALVATION:** God's activity in creating and governing the world, particularly with regard to his plan for the salvation of the world in the person and work of Jesus Christ, a plan which is being accomplished through his Body the Church, in its life and sacraments (1076, 1093).

**ECUMENISM:** Promotion of the restoration of unity among all Christians, the unity which is a gift of Christ and to which the Church is called by the Holy Spirit (816, 820-822).

**ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:** A gathering of all the bishops of the world, in the exercise of their collegial authority over the universal Church. An ecumenical council is usually called by the successor of St. Peter, the Pope, or at least confirmed or accepted by him (884).

**ENCYCLICAL:** A pastoral letter written by the Pope and sent to the whole Church and even to the whole world, to express Church teaching on some important matter. Encyclicals are expressions of the ordinary papal magisterium (cf. 892).

**EPIPHANY:** The feast which celebrates the *manifestation* to the world of the newborn Christ as Messiah, Son of God, and Saviour of the world. The feast of Epiphany celebrates the adoration of Jesus by the wise men (*magi*) from the East, together with his baptism in the Jordan and the wedding feast of Cana in Galilee (528; cf. 535).

**ETERNAL LIFE:** Living forever with God in the happiness of heaven, entered after death by the souls of those who die in the grace and friendship of God (988, 1020).

**EUCCHARIST:** The ritual, sacramental action of thanksgiving to God which constitutes the principal Christian liturgical celebration of and communion in the paschal mystery of Christ; the seven sacraments of the Church; the Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation (1322 ff.). The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life (2177). *See* Mass.

**EVANGELICAL COUNSELS:** In general, the teachings of the New Law proposed by Jesus to his disciples which lead to the perfection of Christian life. In the New Law, the precepts are intended to remove whatever is incompatible with charity; the evangelical counsels are to remove whatever might hinder the development of charity, even if not contrary to it (1973). The public profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience is a constitutive element of state of consecrated life in the Church (915).

**EVANGELIST:** One of the four authors to whom is ascribed the writing of the Gospels, i.e., Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (125, 120). The term is also used for one who works actively to spread and promote the Christian faith.

**EVANGELIZATION:** The proclamation of Christ and his Gospel (Greek: *evangelion*) by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ's command (905; cf. 861).

**EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:** Prayerful self-reflection on our words and deeds in the light of the Gospel to determine how we may have sinned against God. The reception of the Sacrament of Penance ought to be prepared for by such an examination of conscience (1454).

**EXODUS:** God's saving intervention in history by which he liberated the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt, made a covenant with them, and brought them into the Promised Land. The exodus is commemorated by the Jewish people at Passover, which for Christians is a foreshadowing of the "passover" of Jesus Christ from death to life and is celebrated in the memorial of the Eucharist (1363).

**FAITH:** Both a gift of God and a human act by which the believer gives personal adherence to God who invites his response, and freely assents to the whole truth that God has revealed. Faith is both a theological virtue given by God as grace, and an obligation which flows from the first commandment of God (26, 142, 150, 1814, 2087).

**FAITHFUL, THE CHRISTIAN:** Those who have been incorporated into Christ in Baptism and constituted as the people of God, the Church (871).

**FASTING:** Refraining from food and drink as an expression of interior penance, in imitation of the fast of Jesus for forty days in the desert; it is sometimes prescribed by a precept of the Church, especially during the liturgical season of Lent (538, 1434, 2043).

**FATHER, GOD, THE:** God, the first Person of the Blessed Trinity. Jesus revealed that God is Father in a unique way: not only as Creator, the origin of all things, but also as eternal Father in his relationship to his only Son, who is eternally begotten of the Father and consubstantial with the Father (240, 242).

**FATHERS OF THE CHURCH:** Church teachers and writers of the early centuries whose teachings are a witness to the Tradition of the Church (78, 688).

**FEAST DAYS:** The annual cycle of liturgical celebrations commemorating the saving mysteries of Christ's life, as a participation in the Paschal Mystery, which is celebrated annually at Easter, the "Feast of feasts." Feast days commemorating Mary, the Mother of God, and the saints are also celebrated, providing the faithful with examples of those who have been glorified with Christ (1169, 1173).

**FORTITUDE:** One of the four cardinal moral virtues which ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in doing the good (1808). Fortitude (sometimes called strength, courage, or might) is also one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (1299; cf. 712).

**FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:** The perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the "first fruits" of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church identifies twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit (1832).

**GENESIS:** The first book of Bible, which describes God's creation of the world and humanity, and the drama of sin and the hope for salvation (120; cf. 289, 337, 355).

**GENUFLECTION:** A reverence made by bending the knee, especially to express adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (1378).

**GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Permanent dispositions that make us docile to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The traditional list of seven gifts of the Spirit is derived from Isaiah 11:1-3: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord (1830).

**GOD:** The infinite divine being, one in being yet three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God has revealed himself as the "One who is," as truth and love, as creator of all that is, as the author of divine revelation, and as the source of salvation (198, 279).

**GOSPEL:** The "good news" of God's mercy and love revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. It is this *Gospel* or good news that the Apostles, and the Church following them, are to proclaim to the entire world (571, 1946). The *Gospel* is handed on in the apostolic tradition of the Church as the source of all-saving truth and moral discipline (75). The four *Gospels* are the books written by the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John which have for their central object Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son: his life, teachings, Passion and glorification, and his Church's beginnings under the Spirit's guidance (124, 514).

**GRACE:** The free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As *sanctifying grace*, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As *actual grace*, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces (charisms, the grace

of one's state of life) are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation (1996, 2000; cf. 654).

**HAPPINESS:** Joy and beatitude over receiving the fulfillment of our vocation as creatures: a sharing in the divine nature and the vision of God. God put us into the world to know, love, and serve him, and so come to the happiness of paradise (1720).

**HEAVEN:** Eternal life with God; communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the blessed. Heaven is the state of supreme and definitive happiness, the goal of the deepest longings of humanity (1023).

**HELL:** The state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed, reserved for those who refuse by their own free choice to believe and be converted from sin, even to the end of their lives (1033).

**HERMIT:** One who lives the eremitical life. Through silence and solitude, in prayer and penance, the hermit or anchorite vows, although not necessarily publicly, to follow the evangelical counsels out of love for God and desire for the salvation of the world (920).

**HIERARCHY:** The Apostles and their successors, the college of bishops, to whom Christ gave the authority to teach, sanctify, and rule the Church in his name (873).

**HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS:** The order (hierarchy) of the truths in Catholic doctrine, insofar as they vary in their relation to the central mystery and foundation of Christian faith, the mystery of the Holy Trinity (90, 234).

**HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION:** Principal feast days on which, in addition to Sundays, Catholics are obliged by Church law to participate in the Eucharist; a precept of the Church (2043, 2180).

**HOLY SPIRIT:** The third divine Person of the Blessed Trinity, the personal love of Father and Son for each other. Also called the Paraclete (Advocate) and Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit is at work with the Father and the Son from the beginning to the completion of the divine plan for our salvation (685; cf. 152, 243).

**HOLY WATER:** Blessed water, a sacramental used to recall Baptism and as a means of sanctification (1668).

**HOLY WEEK:** The week preceding Easter, beginning with Palm (Passion) Sunday, called the "Great Week" in the liturgies of the Eastern Churches. It marks the Church's annual celebration of the events of Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection, culminating in the Paschal Mystery (1169).

**HOPE:** The theological virtue by which we desire and expect from God both eternal life and the grace we need to attain it (1817).

**HUMILITY:** The virtue by which a Christian acknowledges that God is the author of all good. Humility avoids inordinate ambition or pride, and provides the foundation for turning to God in prayer (2559). Voluntary humility can be described as "poverty of spirit" (2546).

**ICON:** Religious painting traditional among many Eastern Christians. Christian iconography expresses in images the same Gospel message that Scripture communicates by words (1160).

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION:** The dogma proclaimed in Christian Tradition and defined in 1854, that from the first moment of her conception, Mary--by the singular grace of God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ--was preserved immune from original sin (491).

**IMMORTALITY:** The quality of the spiritual human soul whereby it survives the death of the body and remains in existence without end, to be reunited with the body at the final resurrection (363, 366 cf. 1703).

**INCARNATION:** The fact that the Son of God assumed human nature and became man in order to accomplish our salvation in that same human nature. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, is both true God and true man, not part God and part man (461, 464).

**JUDGEMENT:** The eternal retribution received by each soul at the moment of death, in accordance with that person's faith and works ("*the particular judgement*") (1021-1022). The "*Last Judgement*" is God's triumph over the revolt of evil, after the final cosmic upheaval of this passing world. Preceded by the resurrection of the dead, it will coincide with the second coming of Christ in glory at the end of time, disclose good and evil, and reveal the meaning of salvation history and the providence of God by which justice has triumphed over evil (677-679, 1021, 1038).

**JUSTICE:** The cardinal moral virtue which consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and to neighbour (1807). *Original* justice refers to the state of holiness in which God created our first parents (375). *Commutative* justice, which obliges respect for the rights of the other, is required by the seventh commandment; it is distinguished from *legal* justice, which concerns what the citizen owes to the community, and *distributive* justice, which regulates what the community owes its citizens in proportion to their contributions and needs (2411). *See* Social Justice.

**JUSTIFICATION:** The gracious action of God which frees us from sin and communicates "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" (*Rom* 3:22). Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man (1987-1989).

**KINGDOM OF GOD (OF HEAVEN):** The reign or rule of God: "the kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (*Rom* 14:17). The Kingdom of God draws near in the coming of the Incarnate Word; it is announced in the Gospel; it is the messianic Kingdom, present in the person of Jesus, the Messiah; it remains in our midst in the Eucharist. Christ gave to his Apostles the work of proclaiming the Kingdom, and through the Holy Spirit forms his people into a priestly kingdom, the Church, in which the Kingdom of God is mysteriously present, for she is the seed and beginning of the Kingdom on earth. In the Lord's Prayer ("Thy Kingdom come") we pray for its final glorious appearance, when Christ will hand over the Kingdom to his Father (541-554, 709, 763, 2816, 2819).

**LAITY:** The faithful who, having been incorporated into Christ through Baptism, are made part of the people of God, the Church. The laity participate in their own way in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ. Laity are distinguished from clergy (who have received Holy Orders) and those in consecrated life (897).

**LAW, MORAL:** A rule of conduct established by competent authority for the common good. In biblical terms, the *moral law* is the fatherly instruction of God, setting forth the ways which lead to happiness and proscribing those which lead to evil. The *divine or eternal law* can be either *natural* or *revealed* (*positive*). *Natural moral law* is inscribed in the heart, and known by human reason. *Revealed law* is found in the *ancient law* (Old Testament), notably the Ten Commandments, and in the *new law* (Law of the Gospel), the teaching of Christ, notably the Sermon on the Mount, which perfects the ancient law, and of the Spirit, by whose grace it becomes the interior law of charity (1950-1974).

**LECTIO DIVINA:** is a traditional Catholic practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word; it includes reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation (1177; 2708).

**LECTIONARY/LECTOR:** The official, liturgical book (*lectionary*) from which the reader (*lector*) proclaims the Scripture readings used in the Liturgy of the Word (1154).

**LENT:** The liturgical season of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church's liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert in fasting and prayer (540, 1095, 1438).

**LITURGICAL YEAR:** The celebration throughout the year of the mysteries of the Lord's birth, life, death, and Resurrection in such a way that the entire year becomes a "year of the Lord's grace." Thus the cycle of the liturgical year and the great feasts constitute the basic rhythm of the Christian's life of prayer, with its focal point at Easter (1168).

**LITURGY:** Through the liturgy Christ our High Priest continues the work of our redemption through the Church's celebration of the Paschal Mystery by which he accomplished our salvation; i.e. sacraments (1067-1069).

**MAGISTERIUM:** The living, teaching office of the Church, whose task it is to give an authentic interpretation of the word of God, whether in its written form (Sacred Scripture), or in the form of Tradition. The Magisterium ensures the Church's fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles in matters of faith and morals (85, 890, 2033).

**MARKS (NOTES) OF THE CHURCH:** The four attributes (marks or notes) of the Church mentioned in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed: "We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church" (811).

**MARRIAGE:** A covenant or partnership of life between a man and woman, which is ordered to the well-being of the spouses and to the procreation and upbringing of children. When validly contracted between two baptized people, marriage is a sacrament (Matrimony) (1601).

**MARTYR:** A witness to the truth of the faith, in which the martyr endures even death to be faithful to Christ. Those who die for the faith before having received Baptism are said to have received a "baptism of blood," by which their sins are forgiven and they share in the death and Resurrection of Christ (1258, 2473).

**MASS:** The Eucharist or principal sacramental celebration of the Church, established by Jesus at the Last Supper, in which the mystery of our salvation through participation in the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Christ is renewed and accomplished. The Mass renews the paschal sacrifice of Christ as the sacrifice offered by the Church. It is called "Mass" (from the Latin *missa*) because of the "mission" or "sending" with which the liturgical celebration concludes (Latin: "*Ite, Missa est.*") (1332; cf. 1088, 1382, 2192). *See* Eucharist; Paschal Mystery/Sacrifice.

**MEDITATION:** An exercise and a form of prayer in which we try to understand God's revelation of the truths of faith and the purpose of the Christian life, and how it should be lived, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking (2705).

**MERIT:** The reward which God promises and gives to those who love him and by his grace perform good works. One cannot "merit" justification or eternal life, which are the free gift of God; the source of any merit we have before God is due to the grace of Christ in us (2006).

**MESSIAH:** A Hebrew word meaning "anointed" (436).

**MINISTRY:** The service or work of sanctification performed by the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments by those in Holy Orders (893, 1536), or in determined circumstances, by laity (903). The New Testament speaks of a variety of ministries in the Church; Christ himself is the source of ministry in the Church (873-874). Bishops, priests, and deacons are ordained ministers in the Church (1548).

**MONASTIC LIFE:** Consecrated life marked by the public profession of religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and by a stable community life (in a monastery) with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours in choir (cf. 927).

**NICENE CREED:** The profession of faith, common to the churches of East and West, which came from the first two ecumenical councils (Nicaea and Constantinople: 325 and 381 a.d.) (195-196). *See* Creed.

**ORDERS, HOLY:** The Sacrament of Apostolic Ministry by which the mission entrusted by Christ to his Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church through the laying on of hands. This sacrament has three

distinct degrees or "orders": deacon, priest, and bishop. All three confer a permanent, sacramental character (1536).

**ORIGINAL SIN:** the first sin by which human beings lost the grace of original holiness; the fallen state of human nature which affects every person born into the world, and from which Christ, the "new Adam," came to redeem us (396-412).

**ORTHODOX CHURCHES:** Eastern Churches who are in an imperfect but deep communion with the Catholic Church by reason of our common Baptism, the profession of the Creed, and the possession of true sacraments by reason of the apostolic succession of their priesthood (838, 1399).

**PAPACY:** The supreme jurisdiction and ministry of the pope as shepherd of the whole Church. As successor of St. Peter, and therefore Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Christ, the pope is the perpetual and visible principle of unity in faith and communion in the Church (882).

**PARABLES:** A characteristic feature of the teaching of Jesus. Parables are simple images or comparisons which confront the hearer or reader with a radical choice about his invitation to enter the Kingdom of God (546).

**PARACLETE:** A name for the Holy Spirit. The term was used by Jesus in the New Testament (cf. *Jn* 14:16) to indicate the promised gift of the Spirit as another consoler and advocate, who would continue his own mission among the disciples (692).

**PASCH/PASCHAL LAMB:** Jesus' saving death and its memorial in the Eucharist, associated with the Jewish feast of Passover (or Pasch) commemorating the deliverance of the Jewish people from death by the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts in Egypt, which the angel of death saw and "passed over." Hence Jesus is acknowledged in the New Testament as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world; he is the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel's redemption at the first Passover. The Eucharist celebrates the new Passover, in which Jesus "passes over" to his Father by his death and resurrection, thus anticipating the final Passover of the Church in the glory of the Kingdom (571, 608, 671, 1334-1340).

**PASCHAL MYSTERY/SACRIFICE:** Christ's work of redemption accomplished principally by his Passion, death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension; "dying he destroyed our death, rising he restored our life" (1067; cf. 654).

**PATRIARCH:** A title given to the venerable ancestors or "fathers" of the Semitic peoples, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who received God's promise of election (61, 205). In the Church hierarchy, especially among the Churches of the East, a patriarch is a senior bishop with jurisdiction over a larger unit of particular churches (patriarchate) of a certain rite or region or liturgical tradition (887).

**PENANCE:** *Interior* penance: a conversion of heart toward God and away from sin, which implies the intention to change one's life because of hope in divine mercy (1431). *External* acts of penance include fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (1434). The observance of certain penitential practices is obliged by the fourth precept of the Church (2043).

**PENANCE, SACRAMENT OF:** The liturgical celebration of God's forgiveness of the sins of the penitent, who is thus reconciled with God and with the Church; the essential elements consist of: contrition, the confession of sins, satisfaction or reparation, the prayer of absolution by the priest. (980, 1422, 1440, 1448).

**PENTECOST:** At Pentecost after the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was manifested, given and communicated as a divine Person to the Church, fulfilling the paschal mystery of Christ according to his promise (726, 731; cf. 1287).

**PEOPLE OF GOD:** A synonym for the Church, taken from the Old Testament people whom God chose, Israel. Christ instituted the new and eternal covenant by which a new priestly, prophetic, and royal People of

God, the Church, participates in these offices of Christ and in the mission and service which flow from them (761, 783).

**PIETY:** One of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit which leads one to devotion to God (1831). Filial piety connotes an attitude of reverence and respect by children toward their parents (2215). Piety also refers to the religious sense of a people, and its expression in popular devotions (1674).

**PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH:** Positive laws (sometimes called commandments) made by Church authorities to guarantee for the faithful the indispensable minimum in prayer and moral effort, for the sake of their growth in love of God and neighbour (2041).

**PRIESTHOOD:** (1) *Of the faithful:* The priestly people of God. Christ has made of his Church a "kingdom of priests," and gives the faithful a share in his priesthood through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation (784, 1119, 1546). (2) *Ministerial:* The ministerial priesthood received in the Sacrament of Holy Orders differs in essence from this common priesthood of all the faithful. It has as its purpose to serve the priesthood of all the faithful by building up and guiding the Church in the name of Christ, who is Head of the Body (1547).

**PRUDENCE:** One of the cardinal moral virtues that dispose the Christian to discern the good and choose the correct means to live according to the law of Christ; it guides conscience formation. (1806).

**PURGATORY:** A state of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship, but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven (1031; cf. 1472).

**REAL PRESENCE:** The unique, true presence of Christ in the Eucharist under the species or appearances of bread and wine. (1378-1379).

**RESURRECTION OF CHRIST:** The bodily rising of Jesus from the dead on the third day after his death on the cross and burial in the tomb. The resurrection of Christ is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ (638).

**RITEs:** The diverse liturgical traditions in which the one catholic and apostolic faith has come to be expressed and celebrated in various cultures and lands. (1201-1203).

**SACRAMENTALS:** Sacred signs which bear a certain resemblance to the sacraments, and by means of which spiritual effects are signified and obtained through the prayers of the Church e.g. cross, scapula, holy water, sacred images. (1667).

**SACRIFICE OF THE MASS:** The perfect sacrifice was Christ's death on the cross; by this sacrifice, Christ accomplished our redemption as high priest of the new and eternal covenant (616). The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is commemorated and mysteriously made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church (1357, 1544).

**SAINT:** The "holy one" who leads a life in union with God through the grace of Christ and receives the reward of eternal life. The Church is called the communion of saints, of the holy ones (823, 946; cf. 828). *See* Canonization.

**SEAL OF CONFESSION:** The confessor's obligation to keep absolutely secret what a penitent has told to him in the Sacrament of Penance; also known as the "sacramental seal" (1467).

**SIN:** An offense against God as well as a fault against reason, truth, and right conscience. Sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the eternal law of God. (1) *Mortal Sin:* a grave infraction of the law of God committed with full knowledge of the evil of the act with the full consent of the agent thus destroying divine life (sanctifying grace) in the soul of the sinner; (2) *Venial Sin:* sin which diminishes and

wounds without destroying divine life; failure to observe necessary moderation, in lesser matters of the moral law, or in grave matters acting without full knowledge or complete consent (1849, 1853-1855, 1857, 1862).

**SOCIAL JUSTICE:** The respect for the human person and the rights which flow from human dignity and guarantee it. Society must provide the conditions that allow people to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and vocation (1928, 1931).

**SOCIAL SIN:** The effect of sin over time, which can affect society and its institutions to create "structures of sin," by analogy called "social sin" (1869).

**SON OF GOD:** The second Person of the Blessed Trinity is called Son of God in reference to his unique relationship to the Eternal Father (441-445).

**SON OF MAN:** The title used by our Lord Jesus in the Gospel connoting a relationship with the eschatological figure of the "Son of man appearing in clouds and glory" in the prophecy of Daniel (*Mk* 13:26; *Dn* 7:13) (440; cf. 661).

**TABERNACLE:** The receptacle in the church in which the consecrated Eucharist is reserved for Communion for the sick and dying (1183, 1379).

**TEMPERANCE:** The cardinal moral virtue that ensures the mastery of the will over instinct, and keeps natural desires within proper limits (1809).

**TRADITION:** The living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church. The oral preaching of the Apostles, and the written message of salvation under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Bible), are conserved and handed on as the deposit of faith through the apostolic succession in the Church. Both the living Tradition and the written Scriptures have their common source in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ (75-82). The theological, liturgical, disciplinary, and devotional traditions of the local churches both contain and can be distinguished from this apostolic Tradition (83).

**TRANSFIGURATION:** The mysterious event in which Jesus, seen speaking with Moses and Elijah on the mountain, was transformed in appearance--in the sight of Peter, James, and John--disclosing his divine glory (554).

**TRIDUUM:** A liturgical celebration of three days duration, as in the Easter Triduum (1168).

**TRINITY:** The mystery of one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The revealed truth of the Holy Trinity is at the very root of the Church's living faith as expressed in the Creed. The mystery of the Trinity in itself is inaccessible to the human mind and is the object of faith only because it was revealed by Jesus Christ, the divine Son of the eternal Father (232, 237, 249, 253-256).

**VENERATION (OF SAINTS):** Showing devotion and respect to Mary, the Apostles, the martyrs and saints, who were viewed as faithful witnesses to faith in Jesus Christ; those who led a life of prayer and self-denial in giving witness to Christ, whose virtues were recognized and publicly proclaimed in their canonization as saints (828). Veneration must be clearly distinguished from adoration and worship, which are due to God alone (1154, 1674, 2132).

**VIRGIN BIRTH:** The conception of Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mary solely by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Church's confession of faith in the virgin birth affirms that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit without human seed (496).

**VIRTUE:** A habitual and firm disposition to do the good. The moral virtues are acquired through human effort aided by God's grace; the theological virtues are gifts of God (1803). *See* Cardinal Virtues.

**VIRTUES, THEOLOGICAL:** Gifts infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. The theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity (1813).

**VOCATION:** The calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter. God has created the human person to love and serve him; the fulfillment of this vocation is eternal happiness (1, 358, 1700). Christ calls the faithful to the perfection of holiness (825). The vocation of the laity consists in seeking the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will (898). Priestly and religious vocations are dedicated to the service of the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation (cf. 873; 931).

**WORD OF GOD:** The entire content of Revelation as contained in the Holy Bible and proclaimed in the Church. In John's Gospel, God's "Word" means his only-begotten Son, who is the fullness of God's Revelation and who took flesh (the Word incarnate) and became man for the sake of our salvation (65, 81, 101, 241, 461; cf. 2653).

**WORKS OF MERCY:** Charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbours in their bodily and spiritual needs (2447). The spiritual works of mercy include instructing, advising, consoling, comforting, forgiving, and patiently forbearing. Corporal works of mercy include feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, sheltering the homeless, and burying the dead (2447).

**YAHWEH (YHWH):** The personal name of the God of Israel, revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai, meaning "I am who I am" (205).

## 8. Acknowledgements

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