



Archdiocese of Detroit

Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines

Developed 2000

**Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines
Office for Faith Formation/Catechetics
Archdiocese of Detroit**

November 2000

With the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1994, Cardinal Maida asked that the Office for Faith Formation/Catechetics for the Archdiocese of Detroit review and update the catechetical curriculum guidelines in light of this new document.

At the request of the Director of the Office for Faith Formation/Catechetics, the Adult Faith Formation/Catechetics Committee of the Archdiocesan Advisory Board of Catholic Education formed a sub-committee in May of 1997 to prepare a draft of catechetical curriculum guidelines.

Under the direction of Sr. Mary Lou Putrow, OP, Professor of Catechetics, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, the sub-committee met for a period of two years to design catechetical guidelines which pattern the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. To this end the following guidelines are proposed for catechesis of persons from age three through adulthood.

We acknowledge the contributions of the following:

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The basic documents, On Catechesis in Our Time, The General Directory for Catechesis, The National Catechetical Directory, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, have provided the vocabulary and direction for the formulation of Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Detroit. These same sources also directed choices and decisions regarding the content of the guidelines. Given the central position of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in all catechetical endeavors, the concepts in the document are arranged according to the four pillars of the Catechism. The number references are Catechism paragraphs. In examining the Guidelines, one will note that care has been taken to honor the four dimensions of catechesis: the kerygma, prayer and worship, service in justice and charity, and formation of community.

The Guidelines serve a needed but limited purpose in the catechetical endeavor. The National Catechetical Directory states that “catechesis refers to efforts which help individuals and communities acquire and deepen Christian faith and identity through initiation rites, instruction and formation of conscience. It includes both the message presented and the way in which it is presented” (#5). This material refers only to the message presented. It is the responsibility of individual catechetical leaders and catechists to determine appropriate and effective methodology for particular groups. On Catechesis in Our Time further explicates this concept: “The specific nature of catechesis...has the twofold objective of maturing the initial faith and of educating the true disciple of Christ by means of a deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and message of Jesus Christ” (#19). These guidelines speak to that systematic knowledge. There remains the task of addressing “the faith by which one believes and has as its object the person of Jesus Christ (General Directory for Catechesis #92). Although in reality these two purposes are not separated it must be understood that following these guidelines does not comprise the total catechetical task.

Because of the priority given to adult catechesis in all the catechetical documents, guidelines for the adult population are included in this material with the understanding that adulthood cuts across the age span and includes a great variety of needs.

Finally, this material is intended for those parish and school leaders responsible for catechesis.

GENERAL CONCEPTS – AGES 3-5

The early childhood learner is beginning to experience new surroundings – a classroom structure, social interaction and dimensions of a larger environment. Learning is both a cognitive and affective experience requiring use of all five senses.

The faith development of the young child is highly dependent upon the faith of the primary care givers. The experience of the faith of others becomes the foundation upon which the child begins to build a faith life. The environment exerts a profound effect on the young child.

Catechists of the young, while engaging the children in such experiences as story telling, imitative projects, and multisensory opportunities of a religious nature, need to bear in mind the influence of their own faith life. The way in which they reverence God, sacred places and things, their practice of kindness and other virtues is likely to have a deeper effect upon the beginning seeds of faith than many activities in which the child would engage.

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
<p>A. Trinity (238-60)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sign of the Cross (232-33) • Various terminology and images for God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (31-43) 	<p>A. Sacraments (1113-1690)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism as celebration of membership in the Church (1226-28) • Simple rituals involving the symbols of oil, water, bread, candles and blessing (1182-89) • Eucharist as a meal Jesus shares with us (1323,29, 37-38) 	<p>A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All made in image of God (1701-09) • Scriptural stories of Jesus (525-34) 	<p>A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spontaneous prayer (2688) • Prayers of petition, thanksgiving, praise, and contrition (2626-43) • Prayer experienced through song, dance, and gestures (1156-58)
<p>B. Jesus and Incarnation (422-682)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The birth of Jesus (525-30) • Jesus, Son of Joseph and Mary (530-34) 	<p>B. Liturgy (1069-1209)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liturgical year (1168-73) • Christmas (525) • Easter (638-40, 1169) 	<p>B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Jesus (1716-17) • Jesus: forgiving, healing (1718-24) 	<p>B. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign of the Cross (1235; 2157) • Our Father (2759) • Hail Mary (2676-77) • Meal prayers (2660; 2698) • Morning and night prayers (2659, 2698)
<p>C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died for us (595-628) • Jesus rose to give us life (638-55) • People of God (781-86) 		<p>C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve people (1803-09) • Love and respect people (1810-29) • Examine choices (1965-72) 	

GENERAL CONCEPTS – AGES 6-8

Children six to eight are at a stage where the concepts and beliefs of others, primarily parents, are most essential to faith growth. However, the realm of influence is expanding to include teachers, catechists and other significant adults.

It is at this time that children learn about life experiences through stories. They learn about faith experiences through scripture stories, lives of the saints and modern day role models. They are not yet able to think abstractly. It is important that catechists present real experiences and use concrete objects and examples. Catechists of these children also need to concentrate on a strong sense of membership in the faith community so that the seeds that have been planted will grow and provide a healthy foundation for further faith development.

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
A. Trinity (238-60) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God the Father and Creator (198-226) • Jesus the Son, brother and savior (430-35) • God the Holy Spirit, source of strength, and guidance in decisions (687-90) 	A. Sacraments (1113-1690) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism: welcome into God's family (1217-28) • Eucharist: meal Jesus shares with us; Body and Blood; gathering in praise of God (1337-44) • Reconciliation: love and forgiveness (1423-29) 	A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and love for all creation (1700-15) • God's grace (1997-98) 	A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayers of petition, thanksgiving, praise, and contrition (2626-43) • Liturgical prayer (1140)
B. Jesus Incarnate (422-682) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Jesus (535-60) • Paschal Mystery: death and resurrection (571-655) 	B. Liturgy (1069-1209) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of the Mass (1348-55) • Church seasons: Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter (1163-73) • Liturgical space (1179-86) 	B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commandments (2052-55) • Conscience formation (1749-56) 	B. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign of the Cross (1235; 2157) • Our Father (2759) • Hail Mary (2676-77) • Act of Contrition (1451-54) • Apostles' Creed (194)
C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church: community, people of God (781-86) • Angels (328-36) 		C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporal works of mercy (2443-49) • Church ministry (2044-46) 	

GENERAL CONCEPTS – AGES 9-11

Children of this age are said to be in the “group” or “belonging stage” of faith development. Having experienced a sense of affiliation in the family, they now expand that sense and want to join clubs, groups and organizations. They are naturally ready for the development of Christian community. Because of their strong appreciation of justice and fairness these children should have opportunities that introduce them to social justice and action. They are able to understand forgiveness and reconciliation as responses to hurt and unfairness and other occasions, which divide or exclude. They value friendship and come to view God as a trusted companion. Faith at this age is largely unquestioned and children will conform to the experiences, values and understandings of the faith group to which they belong. As at the previous level, catechists need to reinforce a sense of belonging to the Christian community and provide opportunities for the development of fairness and justice.

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
A. Trinity (238-92) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God our Creator (295-301) • Jesus’ relationship to the Father (441-51) • Holy Spirit (687-701) 	A. Sacraments (1113-1690) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God’s presence in the world (1122-30) • Symbolic actions of Christ (1114-20) • Initiation (1121) • Healing (1122) 	A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covenant relationships (2197-2206) • Humanity made in the image and likeness of God (1878-85) • Grace (1997-2005) 	A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus and prayer (2599-2616) • Prayers of petition, thanksgiving, and praise (2626-43) • Liturgical music (1156-58)
B. Jesus and Incarnation (422-682) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Jesus (535-60) • Kingdom of God (541-56) • Paschal Mystery (571-655) 	B. Liturgy (1069-1209) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church at prayer (1140-44) • The liturgical year (1163) • Feasts and seasons (1168-73) 	B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commandments (2056-74) • Beatitudes (1716-17) • Good and evil (1750-56) • Original sin (386-90) • Sin and mercy (1846-64) 	B. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosary (2678) • Prayers of the Mass (1153) • Our Father (2761-72) • Creed (185-97)
C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible (115-33) • The Church – the Body of Christ (787-96) • People of other faiths (820-22) • Resurrection of the body (988-1014) 		C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity of creation (2415-18) • Human rights and life issues (2259-98) 	

GENERAL CONCEPTS – AGES 12-14

Young adolescents experience a vast array of changes in all aspects of their lives. Their faith life is no exception. The faith of significant adults is no longer the strong supportive structure of faith that it was at a younger age. As the adolescent begins to grow out of childhood faith, this separation often expresses itself in terms of questions and doubts, troubling relationships with authority and concern about self-expression and appearance.

The young adolescent needs to experience compassionate understanding and assistance in the search for self. The propensity for deepening friendships is fertile ground for seeking a more profound relationship with God. Catechists would do well to build on the need for being part of a group and provide the opportunities to participate more fully in the life of the church.

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
A. Trinity (238-60) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation (56-79) • Faith (84-95) • Mystery (238-60) 	A. Sacraments (1113-1690) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual effects (1113-30) • Sacraments prefigured in Scripture (1077-87) • Christ as celebrant (1136-44) 	A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in solidarity (1939-42) • Common good (1905-12) • Catholic social doctrine (2419-25) • Natural law (1954-60) 	A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal (2559-65) • Communal (2689) • Retreats (2691) • Meditation (2705-08)
B. Jesus and Incarnation (422-682) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person: human and divine (464-78) • Titles (429-54) • Ministry (535-60) 	B. Liturgy (1069-1209) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrations; rites (1200-06) • Mary and Saints (1172-73) • Sacramentals (1667-76) 	B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human acts (1750-56) • Moral conscience (1776-82) • Sin: social and personal (1846-53) • Church precepts (2041-43) 	B. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Father (2765-66) • Creed (185-97) • Prayer of the Hours (1174-78) • Psalms (2585-89) • Way of the Cross (2669)
C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church history (758-69) • Mission and ministry (770-76) • People of God (781-86) • Creed (185-97) • Communion of Saints (946-59) • Mary (487-507; 964-72) 		C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within family (2201-06) • In larger community (2044-46) • Christian beatitudes (1720-24) 	

GENERAL CONCEPTS – AGES 15-18

Catechesis for this age level involves the process of conversion as a spiritual journey. Conversion includes the stages of pre-evangelization, evangelization and catechesis (Renewing the Vision, NCCB, 1997).

Youth Ministry and Catholic School religion programs need to take into account doctrinal instruction, prayer and worship, retreats and days of recollection, service, value clarification, conscience formation, and practice in moral decision-making. The goal of the entire process is to initiate and deepen commitment to Jesus and to foster active membership in the Christian community.

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
A. Trinity (144-175; 232-267) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation (238-60) • Mystery of faith (144-75) 	A. Sacraments (1113-1690) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation (1229-33; 1533) • Healing (1420-21) • Mission and vocation (1534-35) 	A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships (1878-85) • Sexuality (2337-47) • Vocation choices (2348-50) 	A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liturgical prayer and practice (2655) • Scriptural prayer (2568-2619) • Meditation (2705-08)
B. Jesus and Incarnation (422-682) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person: human, divine and relational (464-78) • Paschal mystery (571-655) 	B. Liturgy (1069-1209) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paschal mystery (1085, 1113-21) • Paschal banquet (1382-1405) 	B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscience formation (1783-94) • Call to conversion (1812-29) 	B. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creed (185-97) • Prayer of the Hours (1174-78) • Marian devotions (2673-79) • Liturgy (1145-62)
C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scriptures (115-33) • Church history and mission (758-801) • Eschatology (1021-50) 		C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage, family, parenting (2214-33) • Systemic social problems (1913-17) 	

GENERAL CONCEPTS – On-going Formation in the Faith

Sharing the Light of Faith and Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community suggest some needs, among others, of the adult Christian community in the United States: assistance with their own problems and decisions; communicating their faith to others; involvement in the church's mission, living the Christian message in its fully developed form, and reflection upon their faith journey. Further, they name a language of faith more adequate to various adult situations, a welcoming Christian community, a greater variety of catechetical methods and a more consistent effort to reach out to the adult community. Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community insists that adult catechesis should be in the overall pastoral plan of the parish (#29).

The Profession of Faith	The Celebration of the Christian Mystery	Life in Christ	Christian Prayer
A. Trinity (144-175; 232-267) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation (238-60) • Mystery of faith (144-75) 	A. Sacraments (1113-1690) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation (1229-33; 1533) • Healing (1420-21) • Service (1534-35) • Centrality of Eucharist (1322-32) • Vocation as response to Baptism (1694) 	A. Dignity of the Human Person (1700-1748) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evangelization and human rights (2234-46) • Personal relationship with God in solidarity with neighbor (1878-89) • Beatitudes (1716-24) 	A. Forms of Prayer (2558-2649) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liturgy (2655-58) • Contemplative prayer (2709-19) • Spiritual direction (2690) • Home rituals (2685) • Prayer groups (2689) • Retreats (2691)
B. Jesus and Incarnation (422-682) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paschal mystery (571-655) • Second coming (668-79) 	B. Liturgy (1069-1209) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church as the locus of God's self-revelation (1145-52) • The communal dimension of the Christian life (1140-44) • Committed to the formation of and by the Christian faith community (1267-1270) 	B. Morality and Virtue (1749-1876; 2052-2557) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of moral practice (1950-60) • Practices of charity demanded by the Gospel (1965-74) • Commandments (2052-74) • Conscience formation (1783-85) • Theological virtues (1812-29) 	C. Traditional Prayers (2650-2865) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalter (2587-89) • Word of God (2568-2619) • Prayer to Jesus (2665-69) • Prayer of the Hours (1174-78)
C. Catholic Beliefs (51-133; 184-221; 811-873) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning of creed (185-97) • Understanding of scripture (101-33) • Magisterial teachings (85-90; 888-92; 2033-36) • Marks of the Church (811-65) • Church as people of God (781-86) • Ecumenism (820-22) 		C. Social Justice and Service (1702-2051) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice as constitutive of the Gospel (1804-09) • Church's teaching on social justice (2419-41) • Commitment to work for justice (2234-46) • Preferential option for the poor (2443-49) 	

Catechetical faith formation shall be based on the principles of catechesis found in:

Documents:

- Declaration on Christian Education (Vatican Council II), 1965
- To Teach as Jesus Did: A Pastoral Message on Catholic Education (NCCB), 1972
- Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education (NCCB), 1973
- On Evangelization in the Modern World (Paul VI), 1975
- Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory (USCC), 1978
- On Catechesis in Our Time (John Paul II), 1979
- *The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis* (National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry), 1986
- *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (Congregation for Divine Worship), 1988
- The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education), 1988
- *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community* (International Council for Catechesis), 1990
- Guidelines for Doctrinally Sound Catechetical Materials (NCCB), 1990
- Guidelines For The Celebration Of The Sacraments With Persons With Disabilities (NCCB), 1995
- Renewing the Vision, A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry (USCC), 1997
- *General Directory for Catechesis* (Congregation for the Clergy), 1997
- Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us (USCC), 1999

Texts:

- Code of Canon Law, 1983
- Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994
- Religious Education and the Law, a Handbook for Parish Catechetical Leaders, 1996
- Human Sexuality, a Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning, 1990

Archdiocese of Detroit:

- One in Faith and Knowledge, A Vision Statement for Catholic Education, 1991
- Policies and Procedures Manual and DRE Handbook, 1999
- Guidelines for Implementation of Programs on Human Love Education, 1991
- Catechist Formation Topic Outlines, revised, 1996