

Religion Guidelines

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

These Religion Guidelines are those published in 2000 reformatted into trimesters. Each Grade contains the following:

- The **core content** with references to Scripture

To help teachers in their presentations, the outline is referenced to scripture which suggests certain passages that complement a specific topic in the outline. Teachers are encouraged to use the scripture passages for personal prayer as well as for reflection and for sharing with students. This could help the children become increasingly more familiar and comfortable with scripture and its importance in the lives of both the Church and of those who are followers of Jesus Christ. The numbers on the right side of the page in parentheses correspond to the **paragraph numbers** in the Catechism of the Catholic Church which treat of a specific subject or concept. This to help the teachers in their own background reading. It is not intended that students be taught directly from the Catechism.

- The **Liturgical Year** (Ordinary Time; Advent; Christmas Season; Lent; Holy Week; Triduum; Easter Season; Saints, Feasts and Special People) is developed according to its appropriate placement in each trimester. The importance of *Sunday* is stressed.
- Summaries of the feasts of **Mary** and lives of the **Saints**
- **Praying with Children**

Each Grade is required to learn certain of our Traditional Catholic Prayers. The versions we should teach can be found in either the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), Appendix B: Traditional Catholic Prayers *or* the Compendium: Catechism of the Catholic Church, Appendix A: Common Prayers (English and Latin).

Hopefully, using these guidelines as the basis of teaching the subject of Religion will contribute to developing a strong religious foundation in the Catholic Faith for each student, and invite the student into the mission of the Church which is the mission of Jesus Christ. It is our hope that each student will come to a deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith and be able to articulate this faith. The **faith believed** is the **faith celebrated** in one's full, conscious and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. The **faith believed** is the **faith lived** in a moral life that demonstrates the social consequences of living according to the demands of the Gospel. It is a life that serves the needs of others with care and compassion. The **faith believed** is the **faith prayed** in attitudes of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and awe for the glory of God.

GRADE 7

First Trimester

- I. NEW TESTAMENT** (124)
- A. TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS (27 books)
- B. KINDS OF BOOKS
1. The Gospels (4) (125,126)
- a. Definition
 - b. Origin and Purpose
 - c. Number and Names
 - d. Synoptic Gospels (3)
 - 1) Definition
 - 2) Number and Names
2. The Acts of the Apostles
- a. Definition
 - b. Author
3. The Letters/Epistles
- a. Definition
 - b. Purpose
 - c. Number (21)
 - d. Authors
 - 1) The Letters of Paul (13)
 - 2) The Letters of Peter (2)
 - 3) The Letters of John (3)
 - 4) The Letters of James (1)
 - 5) The Letters of Jude (1)
 - 6) The Letter to the Hebrews
(Anonymous Author)
4. Revelation
- a. Definition
 - b. Author
- II. JESUS** (430-35)

Jesus means “God saves.”

A.	IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD AND THE WORD WAS GOD.	Jn 1:1
B.	THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND MADE HIS DWELLING AMONG US.	Jn 1:14, (456,484-86)
	1. Annunciation	Lk 1:26-38(484)
	2. Incarnation	Jn 1:14 (461-63)
	3. Birth	Is 7:10-14, (487-489,502-07)
	4. Role of Joseph	Mt 1:18-25
C.	INFANCY NARRATIVES	(525-30)
	1. Matthew	Mt. 1,2
	2. Luke	Lk. 1,2
D.	CHILDHOOD OF JESUS	Lk. 2:41-52(530-34)
E.	BEGINNING OF PUBLIC LIFE AND MINISTRY	(535-70)
	1. Role of John the Baptist	Lk. 3:1-18, (523)
	2. Temptations in the desert	Lk. 4: 1-13
	3. Call of the disciples	Mk. 1:14-22, Jn. 1:35-51
	4. Marriage Feast of Cana	Jn. 2:1-11, (1613)
F.	JESUS SEEN IN VARIOUS ROLES	
	1. Jesus, the <i>Teacher</i>	
	a. Taught in parables	(546)
	1) Of the Kingdom of God	Mk. 4:30-34, 13: 24-46, (543-46)
	2) Of mercy and forgiveness	Lk. 15: 4-7, 15: 8-32
	3) On the Second Coming	Mk 25: 1-13

of Christ

- 4) On prayer Lk. 18:1-8
- b. Taught with authority Mk. 1:22
 - 1) In the synagogue Lk. 4:18
 - 2) In the Temple Jn. 8:54-59, 10:23-30
 - 3) Laws-Love and the Beatitudes Mt. 5:1-12, 22:37-39 (1716-24)

2. Jesus, the *Healer*

- a. Physical healings Mk. 10:46-52
- b. Physical and spiritual healings Mk. 9:8-26
- c. Spiritual healings Mk. 16:9, Lk. 5: 17-26

3. Jesus, the *Reconciler*

- a. Forgives sins Lk. 22: 54-62
- b. Urges reconciliation
 - 1) With friends Mt. 5: 23-24
 - 2) With enemies Mt. 5: 43-44

4. Jesus, the *Lover of All People*

- a. The poor
 - 1) Feeds the multitude Mk. 6: 34-44
 - 2) Praises poor widow Lk. 21: 1-4
- b. Women
 - 1) The Samaritan woman Jn. 4:4-42
 - 2) Jairus's Daughter Lk. 8: 40-56
- c. Outcasts
 - 1) Lepers Lk. 17: 11-19
 - 2) Foreigners Mt. 8: 5-13

- d. Sinners (588-89)
 - 1) Tax collectors Lk. 19: 1-10
 - 2) The Sinful Woman Lk. 7: 36-50

f. Friends

- 1) Beloved disciples Jn. 13-23-55
- 2) Martha, Mary, Lazarus Jn. 11:1-44

5. Jesus, the *Man of Prayer* (2598-2616)

- a. Prayed to his Father (ABBA) Mk. 6: 5-15
- b. Prayed frequently Mk. 1:35
- c. Prayed in his agony Lk. 22: 39-46

G. THE PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST (571-73)

Teach this section using the appropriate Synoptic Gospel:

Cycle A-St. Matthew

Cycle B- St. Mark

Cycle C- St. Luke

Use the Gospel of John each year

- 1. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
 - Mt. 21: 1-11
 - Mk 11: 1-11
 - Lk. 19: 28-40
 - Jn. 12: 12-19
- 2. Betrayal by Judas
 - Mt. 26: 14-16
 - Mk. 14: 12-31
 - Lk. 22: 1-6
- 3. Last Supper
 - Mt. 26: 17-35
 - Mk. 14: 10-11
 - Lk. 22: 7-38
- 4. Last Discourse
 - Jn. 13-17

a. Washing of the feet	Jn. 13: 1-17
b. The Betrayal	Jn. 13: 18-30
5. Agony in the Garden	Mt. 26: 36-46 Mk. 14: 32-42 Lk. 22: 39-46
6. Arrest	Mt 26: 47-56 Mk. 14: 43-52 Lk. 22: 47-53 Jn. 18: 1-13
7. Trial	Mt. 26:57-68 Mk. 14:53-65 Lk 22: 63-71 Jn. 18:19-40
8. Peter's denial	Mt. 26:69-75 Mk. 14:66-72 Lk. 22: 54-62
9. Jesus before Pilate	Mt. 27: 11-26 Mk. 15:1-15 Lk. 22: 54-62
10. Scourging and crowning with thorns	Mt. 27:26-31 Mk. 15:15-20 Jn. 19:1-16
11. The Way of the Cross	Mt. 27:32-34 Mk. 15:20-21 Lk. 23: 26-31
12. The Crucifixion	Mt. 27:35-44 Mk. 15:22-32 Lk. 23: 32-43 Jn. 19: 16-29
13. The Death of Jesus	Mt. 27:57-66 Mk. 15: 33-51 Lk. 23: 44-49 Jn. 19: 3-37
14. The Burial of Jesus	Mt. 27: 57-66 Mk. 15: 42-47 Lk. 23: 50-56 Jn. 19:38-42

H. THE RESSURECTION

On the third day he rose again. (638-55)

1. Matthew's Gospel Mt. 28:1-15
2. Mark's Gospel Mk. 16: 1-14
3. Luke's Gospel Lk. 25: 1-49
4. John's Gospel Jn. 20-21

I. JESUS APPEARS TO HIS FRIENDS

1. The Road to Emmaus Lk. 24: 13-35
2. Thomas the Apostle Jn. 20: 24-29

J. THE ASCENSION

Mt. 28: 16-20
Mk. 16: 19-20
Lk. 24:50-53 (659-67)

III. LITURGICAL YEAR

A. DEFINITION

The cycle of feasts and seasons celebrating the events of the life of Jesus Christ and his presence in the Church.

B. SUNDAY

The Lord's day is the day on which we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We participate in the Mass on this most special of all days to give praise and thanks to God.

This is the heart of the Church's life.

C. ORDINARY TIME

1. Time in the winter between Christmas time and Lent.
2. Time in the summer and fall from Pentecost to the Feast of Christ the King.

3. Refers to ordinal, counted time.
4. Liturgical color is green for hope, growth, life.
5. Time to hear the Scriptures proclaimed inviting us to live out the mysteries of our faith remembered in the special seasons and the message of the Gospels.
 - a. Cycle A - Gospel of St. Matthew
 - b. Cycle B - Gospel of St. Mark
 - c. Cycle C - Gospel of St. Luke

D. ADVENT (524)

1. Liturgical color is purple for preparation, sorrow for sin
2. Begins the Liturgical Year
3. Period of four weeks of preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ, Christmas
 - a. Prayers and readings emphasize the coming of Christ
 - b. First part of Advent focuses on Jesus' Second Coming at the end of time
 - c. Second part of Advent focuses on Jesus' coming into human history in Bethlehem
4. Advent Symbols
 - a. Advent Wreath
 - b. Jesse Tree
 - c. "O Antiphons"

V. SAINTS, FEASTS AND SPECIAL PEOPLE (1172-73)

Special days to honor saints are ranked and celebrated in different degrees.

Solemnity: liturgies celebrating events, beliefs, and personages of principal importance and universal significance in salvation history

Feast: liturgies of major importance

Memorial: liturgies celebrating minor events in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of saints significant to a local country, church or religious community

August 6	Feast of the Transfiguration
August 10	Feasts of St. Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr
August 23	St. Rose of Lima, Virgin
August 24	Feast of St. Bartholomew, Apostle
September 14	Feast of Triumph of the Cross
September 21	Feast of St. Matthew, Apostle And Evangelist
September 29	Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel, And Raphael: Archangels
September 30	Memorial of St. Jerome, Priest And Doctor
October 1	St. Therese of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor
October 16	St. Marguerite D'Youville, SGM
October 18	Feast of St. Luke, Evangelist
October 19	Memorial of Saints Isaac Jogues And John de Brebeuf, Priests and Martyrs, and Companions
October 28	Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles
November 1	Solemnity of All Saints
November 2	All Souls Day
November 11	Catherine McCauley, RSM

November 22	Jeanne Fontbonne, SSJ
November 26	Sojourner Truth
November 30	Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle

III. MARY

A. MARY IN THE GOSPELS

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Jesus in the Temple | Lk. 2:41-52 |
| 2. Wedding at Cana | Jn. 2:1-12 |
| 3. True Blessedness | Lk. 11:27-28 |
| 4. Crucifixion of Jesus | Jn. 19:25-27 |

B. THE VIRGINAL CONCEPTION (BYM#42-48) (496-511)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Jesus had no human father | Lk. 1:34-35, Mt. 1:20-25 |
| 2. Doctrine's basis is in Scripture | Mt. 1:20 |
| 3. Established in tradition of Church
from earliest times | |

C. MARY'S VIRGINITY (BYM #49-50, (496-507))

1. Truth that Mary remained always a virgin merged clearly in the Church's consciousness in the 4th Century: phrase "ever virgin" common
2. Early consecrated virgins and celibate monks and hermits discovered in Mary an example of virginal consecration to Christ.

IV. PRAYER (2558-2865)

A. DEFINITION Lk. 11:1-4, NCD #140, (2590)

B. MODEL OF PRAYER

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Jesus prays | (2599) |
| a. Before decisive moments of his life | (2600) |
| b. In solitude | (2601) |

c. “Priestly prayer” before his suffering and death	(2604)
2. Jesus teaches us how to pray	(2607,2621)
a. With faith	(2609)
b. With boldness	(2610)
c. With patience and humility	(2613)
C. THE LORD’S PRAYER “Our Father”	(2759-66)
D. PURPOSE OF PRAYER	
1. Adoration	(2628)
2. Thanksgiving	(2673-38)
3. Petition	(2629,2634-36)
4. Contrition	(2631)

IV. SACRAMENTALS

A. DEFINITION	(1667-70)
B. POPULARITY PIETY (Devotions)	(1674-76,1679)
1. Veneration of relics	
2. Pilgrimages	
3. Procession	
4. The Stations of the Cross	
5. Religious dances	
6. The Rosary	
7. Medals, etc.	

V. SOCIAL JUSTICE

“The commitment to human life and dignity, to human rights and solidarity, is a calling all Catholic educators must share with their students. It is not a vocation for a few religion teachers, but a challenge for every Catholic educator and catechist.”

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions, USCC, 1998, p. 7

Major Themes:

**The Life and Dignity of the Human Person
Call to Family, Community, and Participation**

A. AWARENESS OF THE BASIC DIGNITY OF EACH PERSON

1. Discuss appropriate ways to show respect for all human life.
2. Discuss appropriate ways to handle attitudes of prejudice towards persons because of race, religion, ethnic heritage, sex, disability.
3. Share ways to resolve family conflicts
4. Practice acting in ways that reflect the attitudes and teachings of Jesus Christ.

B. RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

1. Participate in parish/school programs for the poor and homeless, for example: food, clothing, toys, etc.
2. Connect with Archdiocesan Social Service Agencies

Second Trimester

I. JESUS THE CHRIST

(436)

Christ means anointed

II. JESUS IS LORD

Lk. 1: 43, Phil 2: 10-11
1Cor. 12:3, (446-51)

This title acknowledges the divine mystery of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is God.

This title also shows the respect and trust shown him by those who approached for help and healing.

III. LITURGICAL YEAR

(1167-71)

A. CHRISTMAS

1. Liturgical color is white for joy, glory, innocence
2. Scripture accounts of the birth of Jesus Christ

Mt. 1:18-2:23
Lk. 2:1-21

B. LENT

1. Time of preparation for Easter, forty days
2. From Ash Wednesday to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
3. Liturgical Color is purple for penance, repentance, mortification

C. HOLY WEEK

1. Palm Sunday
2. Triduum

Jn. 12:12-19

- a. Holy Thursday

- 1) Chrism Mass
 - a) Renewal of Commitment to Priestly Service
 - b) Rites of the Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism
 - (1) Consecration of the Chrism
 - (2) Blessing of the Oil of Catechumens
 - (3) Blessing of the Oil of the Sick

2) Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

- a) Introductory Rites
- b) Liturgy of the Word
- c) Washing of Feet
- d) Liturgy of the Eucharist
- e) Transfer of the Holy Eucharist

b. Good Friday

Celebration of the Lord's Passion

Liturgical color is red for Christ's blood which was shed for us.

c. Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil

d. Easter

Sunset of Holy Saturday to sunset of Easter Sunday

IV. SAINTS, FEASTS, AND SPECIAL PEOPLE

December	8	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Patroness of the United States and of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia)
December	12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Patroness of the Americas)
January	1	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
January	21	Memorial of St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr
January	25	Feast of the Conversion of Paul
February	2	Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

February	3	St. Blasé, Bishop and Martyr
March	3	St. Katharine Drexel, Religious
March	17	St. Patrick, Bishop
March	19	Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary

V. PRAYER

A. DEFINITION (2559-65,2697)

B. OTHER FORMS OF PRAYER (See *Appendix on Prayer*)

1. The “Jesus Prayer”
2. Praying in Common (Choral Prayer)
3. Gesture and Song
4. Journal Keeping

C. THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

This prayer has its roots in the *berakah*, a Jewish prayer of blessing.

1. This the pattern of all our Eucharistic Prayers

- a. Name and praise God
- b. Remember the saving acts of God in salvation history
- c. Intercede that these mysteries become present now through the calling upon (invocation) of the Holy Spirit
- d. Give thanks that it has been accomplished through Christ and the Spirit

2. Eucharistic Prayer II

a. The *Preface* (1352)

We give thanks to the Father, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit for all his works: creation, redemption, and sanctification.

b. The *Epiclesis*

The Church asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit on the bread and wine so that by his power they may become the Body and Blood of Christ and that those who take part in it may be one body and one spirit.

c. *The Institution Narrative*

The power of the words, the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit make sacramentally present Christ's body and blood under the species of bread and wine.

d. *The Anamnesis*

The Church recalls the Passion, Resurrection of Christ, Jesus and presents to the Father the offering of his Son which reconciles us with him.

e. *The Intercessions*

The Church indicates that the Eucharist is celebrated with the whole Church in heaven and on earth.

VI. MARY

- A. BLESSEDNESS OF MARY (BYM #51-56)
1. Mary emphasized in Scripture as "Blessed" Lk 1:42
 2. Dogma of the Immaculate Conception focuses on Mary as full of grace, as "preserved free from all stain of original sin" from the moment of her conception. Lk 11: 27-28
 3. The Immaculate Conception prepared Mary for her greatest privilege: Motherhood of Jesus, the Savior. (490-93)
 4. The dogma of the Assumption focuses on Mary's participation in her Son's Resurrection and anticipates the resurrection of other Christians BYM #57-61, (966,974)

It is the oldest liturgical feast of Mary in the Church dating to about the fifth century.

B. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY

August 15

Solemnity of the Assumption

August	21	Our Lady of Knock
August	22	Memorial of the Queenship of Mary
September	8	Feast of the Birth of Mary
September	15	Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows
October	7	Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary
November	19	Our Lady of Divine Providence
November	21	Memorial of the Presentation of Mary
December	8	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Patroness of the United States and of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia)
December	12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Patroness of the Americas)
January	1	Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God

VII. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Major Themes:

Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person Care for God's Creation

A. AWARENESS OF CARING FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER

1. Discuss current legislation that helps the poor and homeless.
2. Determine ways to help those in need locally, statewide and globally
3. Determine ways to better use natural resources

Third Trimester

I. LITURGY AND WORSHIP

A. DEFINITION (1069-70)

1. The priestly work of Jesus Christ
2. The sacred action of the Church,
the Mystical Body of Christ
3. Worship, the proclamation of the Gospel
and works of charity

B. PURPOSE (1110-12)

1. To adore and bless God the Father as the source
of all the blessings of creation and salvation
2. To give praise and thanks for the mystery of salvation

won for us by God's Son, Jesus Christ, which
is made present through the power of the Holy Spirit
3. To be prepared by the Holy Spirit, as assembly,
to encounter Christ and the mystery of salvation

II. THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH

A. REVOLVES AROUND THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE AND THE SACRAMENTS (1113)

B. THE BODY OF CHRIST GATHERS IN A PARTICULAR SITUATION
(A juncture of life)

1. The assembly gathers (1188)
according to each one's own function.
2. "The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols (1189)
relating to creation (candles, water, fire), human life
(washing, anointing, breaking bread), and the history

of salvation(The Rites of the Passover).”

3. The assembly gathers around the sacramental signs and
 - a. Proclaims the Word (1100-01, 1190)
 - b. Celebrates prayer (1103, 1105-06)
 - c. Performs the ritual
4. The sacramental sign and the assembly are transformed. (1109)

C. THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

The seven sacraments are the actions of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church (1116)

1. Purpose (1123)

- a. To sanctify men and women
- b. To build up the Body of Christ
- c. To give worship to God

2. Signs of the sacraments

The celebration of the sacrament is accomplished through the power of God. (1128)

The power of Christ and his Spirit act in and through the actions of the sacraments.

The fruit of the sacrament depends on the disposition of the one receiving it.

a. Baptism (1217-22)

1) Sign-water (1238)

Symbol of life and death
Something is destroyed,
Something is brought to life.

2) Lectionary Readings
for the Sacrament

3) The Prayer of the Rite (1240)

The Formula for Baptism
“N, I baptize you...”

4) Ritual Gesture (1239)

Immersion into the water
or pouring of water

b. Confirmation

1) Sign- chrism (1293-96)

Symbol of abundance and joy
Something is made radiant
with beauty, health, and strength.

2) Lectionary Reading
for the Sacrament

3) The Prayer of the Rite (1300)

Formula for Confirmation
“N, be sealed...”

4) Ritual Gesture (1300)

Laying on of hands
and anointing with the oil of chrism

c. Eucharist

1) Sign- bread and wine (1333-36)

Signify the goodness of creation
(the “fruit of the earth” and “of the vine”)

2) Lectionary Readings (1349)

3) Eucharistic Prayer (1352-54)

4) Ritual Gesture (1355)

Extension of hands of the priest

during the Prayer, eating and drinking
of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

- d. Penance/Reconciliation (1451)
 - 1) Sign- Sorrow for sins
 - 2) Lectionary Readings
for the Sacrament
 - 3) Prayer of the Rite (1449)
Formula of Absolution
 - 4) Ritual Gesture
Extension of hands over penitent

- e. Anointing of the Sick (1511-12)
 - 1) Sign- oil of the Sick
 - 2) Lectionary Readings (1518)
for the Sacraments
 - 3) Prayer of the Rite (1513)
the Sacramental Formula
 - 4) Ritual Gesture (1519)
Laying on of hands and
anointing with the oil of the sick

- f. Holy Orders (1538,1554,1556,1573)
 - 1) Sign- laying on of hands
and anointing with chrism
 - 2) Lectionary Readings
for the Sacrament
 - 3) Prayer of Consecration
proper to each ordination
 - a) Bishop (1541,1586)
 - b) Priest (1542)
 - c) Deacon (1543)

4) Ritual Gesture

a) Bishop

Laying on of hands and
anointing of head

b) Priest

Laying on of hands and anointing
of palms with the oil of chrism

c) Deacon

Laying on of hands

g. Matrimony (1602,1613,1617,1621)

1) Sign- exchange of vows/
Matrimonial consent (1623, 1625-27)

2) Lectionary Readings
for the Sacrament

3) Prayer of the Rite (1630)
Nuptial Blessing

4) Ritual Gesture
Joining of hands and
Exchange of vows

D. SUNDAY (1667,1193)

This day calls to mind the Passion, Resurrection,
and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pre-eminent day of the liturgical assembly.

It is the foundation of the liturgical year.

E. LITURGY OF THE HOURS (1174,1196)

All the hours of the day are made holy
by the faithful gathering to praise God.
This is the “public prayer of the Church.”

F. LITURGICAL YEAR (1167-68,1194)

The brilliance of the Resurrection fills the whole year and transfigures it by the liturgy.

1. The liturgical year unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his Incarnation through his Ascension to Pentecost.
2. The celebration of days in honor of Mary and the saints recognize, as models, those faithful people who responded to the call of God and stand as intercessors for us. (1172-73)

G. BLESSINGS

(Other than the references to the Catechism, the following information can be found in the Book of Blessings, The Liturgical Press, Minnesota, 1989)

1. All of God's work is a blessing (1079)
2. Jesus Christ is the supreme blessing given to us. (1082)
3. The celebration of blessings holds a privileged place among all the sacramentals.
 - a. Blessings lead the faithful to praise God.
 - b. Blessings can sanctify various situations and events in the lives of the faithful.
4. Celebration of a blessing
 - a. First part-
Proclamation of the Word of God
 - b. Second part-
Praise of God's goodness and petition for his help.
5. Types of blessings
 - a. Blessings pertaining to persons
 - b. Blessings related to building and to

various forms of human activity

c. Blessings of objects used in Churches or in the liturgy or popular devotions.

d. Blessings of articles meant to foster devotion of the Christian people.

e. Blessings related to feasts and seasons

f. Blessings for various needs and occasions.

6. To BLESS is to uncover the presence of God in our daily lives so we can respond to him and give him praise and thanks.

7. Sunday is to the week what the Liturgy of the Hours is to the day and the Liturgical Seasons are to the year.

III. PRAYER

A. KINDS

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Lectio | (2700) |
| God speaks to us in his WORD | |
| 2. Our response | (2702) |
| a. Vocal | (2704, 2722) |
| b. Meditation | (2705-08, 2723) |
| c. Contemplation | (2709-19, 2724) |

B. PURPOSES

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. Adoration | (2628) |
| 2. Thanksgiving | (2637-38) |
| 3. Petition | (2629) |
| 4. Contrition | (2631) |

C. OTHER FORMS (See *Appendix on Prayer*)

1. Guided Meditation
2. Shared Prayer

IV. MARY

A. MOTHER OF GOD

Lk 1: 26-38, (BYM #62-64),
(485,495,509,723)

1. Defined at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.

2. Mary's role in the Church flows from her union with her Son, Jesus the Christ

3. Mary continues to bring us the gift of salvation as our intercessor before God (969,975)

B. DAYS IN HONOR OF MARY

February 2 The Purification of Mary

February 11 Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

March 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation

May 31 Feast of the Visitation

May (variable) The Immaculate Heart of Mary

July 16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel

C. PRAYERS

1. The Angelus
(*Queen of Heaven* during the Easter Season)

2. The *Hail, Holy Queen*

V. LITURGICAL YEAR

(1167-71)

A. EASTER SEASON

Sunset of Easter Sunday to sunset of the Solemnity of Pentecost

1. Easter Sunday: liturgical color is white for glory, joy, innocence

2. Ascension Thursday: liturgical color is white
Marks the end of Jesus' earthly appearances

3. Pentecost: liturgical color is red for the Holy Spirit

- a. Fifty days after Easter
- b. The birthday of the Church

B. OTHER CELEBRATIONS

- 1. Trinity Sunday- Sunday after Pentecost
- 2. Corpus Christi (Body and Blood of Christ)
Sunday after Trinity Sunday
- 3. Solemnity of the Sacred Heart
Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost

C. ORDINARY TIME

Liturgical color is green for hope, growth, life.

D. SAINTS, FEATS, AND SPECIAL PEOPLE (1172-73)

April	25	Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist
May	1	Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker
May	3	Feasts of Sts .Philip and James, Apostles
May	14	Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle
June	24	Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist
June	29	Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles
July	1	Blessed Junipero Serra, Priest
July	3	Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle
July	14	Memorial of Blessed Kateri Tkakwitha, Virgin
July	22	Memorial of St. Mary Magdalene
July	25	Feast of St. James, Apostle

VI. SOCIAL JUSTICE

“The Church’s social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society...In this time of widespread violence and diminished respect for human life and dignity in our country and around the world, the Gospel of life and the biblical call to justice need to be proclaimed and shared with new clarity, urgency, and energy.”

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions, USCC, 1998, p. 4.

Major Themes

Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers Solidarity of the Human Family

- A. AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK
 - 1. Research laws that help create safe working conditions
 - 2. Discuss injustice of sweat shops
 - 3. Share talents with one’s family, classmates, parish organizations

Saints, Feasts, and Special People

The following information is taken from Catholic Source Book, Edited by Rev. Peter Klein, BROWN ROA Publishing Media, 1990, p. 302.

HOLIDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

In the course of the year the Church:

1. **Celebrates** the mystery of the risen Christ,
2. **Honors** Mary, and
3. **Venerates** saints as examples for the living.

HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION

In the United States, there are six holydays:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mary, Mother of God, January 1 | 4. All Saints, November 1 |
| 2. Ascension Thursday | 5. Immaculate Conception, December 8 |
| 3. Assumption, August 15 | 6. Christmas, December 25 |

August 6 *Feast of the Transfiguration* Mt. 17:1-9

August 10 *Feast of St. Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr*

Saint Lawrence was a deacon of the Church of Rome; he was martyred during one of the major persecutions. Devotion to him was popular by the fourth century. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1221)

August 15 *Solemnity of the Assumption*

Pope Pius XII, on November 1, 1950, infallibly defined what Catholics always believed: Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven. (CCC #966)

August 21 *Our Lady of Knock*

This apparition of Our Lady occurred on August 21, 1879 in Knock, Ireland. The vision lasted for two hours and fourteen people witnessed it. They saw figures representing Our Lady, St. Joseph and a bishop. Beside the figures was an altar on which stood a cross and a lamb.

August	22	<i>Memorial of the Queenship of Mary</i>	
August	23	<i>St. Rose of Lima, Virgin</i>	
August	24	<i>Feast of St. Bartholomew, Apostle</i>	
September	8	<i>Feast of the Birth of Mary</i>	
September	14	<i>Feast of the Triumph of the Cross</i>	Jn. 3:13-17
September	15	<i>Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows</i>	
September	21	<i>Feast of St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist</i>	
September	29	<i>Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael: Archangels</i>	
September	30	<i>Memorial of St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor</i>	

Saint Jerome was born around the year 340. He studied in Rome and was baptized there. He then went to the East and was ordained a priest. He returned to Rome where he translated the Scriptures into Latin. He finally settled in Bethlehem and lived there for the rest of his life until his death in 420. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1275)

October	1	<i>Memorial of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, (St. Therese, the Little Flower), Virgin and Doctor</i>
October	7	<i>Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary</i>
October	16	<i>St. Marguerite D'Youville, SGM</i>

Saint Marguerite was born in Quebec, Canada, on October 15, 1701. She married, buried four of her six children, and was widowed by 1730. She dedicated her life to the care of the most destitute. She found the Sisters of Charity of Montreal, the "Grey Nuns." She died in 1737 and today her community of sisters perform multiple works of charity throughout the world. The *SGM* or *GNSH* stands for the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. In our Archdiocese they staff some of our parishes and schools. (The Woman's Prayer Companion, 1994, p. 171)

October 18 *Feast of St. Luke, Evangelist*

October 19 *Memorial of Saints Isaac Jogues, John de Brebeuf, Priests and Martyrs, and Companions, Martyrs (The North American Martyrs)*

October 28 *Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles*

Simon is shown on all four lists of Apostles. He is called the “Zealot, “ after a sect of Jewish nationalists, who thought that the Messianic Promise meant that the Jews would be free and independent of the foreign domination of Rome. The apostle named Jude in Luke and Acts, and Thaddeus in Mark and Matthew, was a fisherman by trade. He was the brother of James, the Apostle. Jude traveled to Mesopotamia to preach and Simon went to Egypt. Eventually, they worked together evangelizing in Persia until they were martyred.

November 1 *Solemnity of All Saints*

November 2 *All Souls Day*

November 11 *Catherine Mc Cauley, RSM*

Catherine Mc Cauley spent most of her adult life helping the poor in Dublin, Ireland. She founded the Order of the Sisters of Mercy in 1831. She died November 11, 1841. The *RSM* stands for the Religious Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. In our Archdiocese they staff some of our hospitals, health care facilities, parishes and schools. (The Woman’s Prayer Companion, 1994, p. 181)

November 19 *Our Lady of Divine Providence*

On November 19, 1969 Pope Paul VI declared Our Lady Mother of Divine Providence principal Patroness of the island of Puerto Rico, since November 19 was the date that the island was discovered. The image of Our Lady that is so special to the people of Puerto Rico shows the Divine Child sleeping peacefully in the Virgin Mary’s arms. However, the name and worship of Our Lady of the Divine Providence originated in Italy in the 12th century, then spread to Spain and then to Puerto Rico.

November 21 *Memorial of the Presentation of Mary*

November 22 *Jeanne Fontbonne, SSJ*

Jeanne Fontbonne was born in France on March 3, 1759. “She became a Sister of St. Joseph (*SSJ*) and served as superior of her community until she was imprisoned at the outbreak of

the French Revolution. She later restored her order, sent a mission to the United States, and eventually saw the establishment of two-hundred new communities.” She died on November 22, 1843. The Sisters of St. Joseph staff parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. (The Woman's Prayer Companion, 1994, p. 187)

November 26 *Sojourner Truth*

“Sojourner Truth was born into slavery ca. 1790. She was freed under state law in 1827. Named Isabella, she changed her name to Sojourner Truth after a religious experience, and became an abolitionist and a spokesperson for women’s rights. She died in 1883.” (The Woman’s Prayer Companion, 1994, p. 189)

November 30 *Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle*

December 8 *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception*

Under the title of the Immaculate Conception, Mary is revered as the Patroness of the United States and of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In 1854, Pope Pius IX declared: “From the first moment of her conception, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, by a unique grace and privilege of God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved from all stain of Original Sin.” (CCC #490-91)

December 12 *Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe*

In 1531, Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, an Aztec farmer. She told Juan to go to Bishop Zumarraga in Mexico City and ask that a Church be built near a native Aztec shrine in Tepeyac. When the bishop demanded a sign, Mary appeared to Juan again and instructed him to bring roses to the bishop. When Juan returned to the bishop with the roses, an image of Mary was emblazoned on his cloak (tilma). The bishop believed and a shrine was built to honor Mary. Inside the basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, pilgrims can see Juan’s cloak with the image of Our Lady on it.

December 25 *Solemnity of Christmas*

This solemnity celebrates that the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived and gave birth to Jesus Christ while remaining a virgin. This is called the Virgin Birth. (CCC #499)

December 27 *Feast of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist*

December 28 *Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs* Mt. 2:13-18

Feast of the Holy Family
(Sunday in the Octave of Christmas)

January 1 *Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God*

This feast of Mary is considered to be one of the oldest and most important feasts of Our Lady. In 431, the Council of Ephesus met to correct false teachings about Christ's divinity. The Council affirmed that Jesus is true God and true man. Since Mary is the Mother of Jesus, who is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, she can truly be called the Mother of God. Devotion to Mary as the Mother of God continued to spread from this time to the present.

January 4 *Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious*

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born in 1774 in New York. When she grew up she married William Seton. They had five children. After the death of her husband, she became a Catholic. Elizabeth Ann Seton opened a school in Baltimore, the first Catholic school in America, and started a community of sisters called the Sisters of Charity. She died in 1821 and was canonized in 1975. She was the first native-born North American to be raised to sainthood.

January 5 *Feast of St. John Neumann, Bishop*

Born in Bohemia on March 20, 1811, John dedicated his life to missionary work in the United States especially in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. As a priest and later as a bishop, he worked tirelessly to educate the members of the Church. He increased the number of parochial schools in Philadelphia, instituted the Forty Hours devotion, and constructed a cathedral. Bishop Neumann died on January 5, 1860, was beatified in 1963, and canonized by Pope Paul VI in June 1977.

January 6 *Feast of the Epiphany*
(Or the Sunday between January 2 and January 8)

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
(Sunday after January 6)

January 21 *Memorial of St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr*

Saint Agnes died a martyr in Rome probably at the beginning of the fourth century. Many Fathers of the Church have honored her in their writings.

January 25 *Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle*

February 2 *Feast of the Presentation of the Lord Lk. 2:22-40*
The Purification of Mary

February 3 *St. Blase, Bishop and Martyr*

February 11 *Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes*

Devotion to Our Lady at this shrine in Lourdes, France, has been popular since her apparition to the young girl, Bernadette Soubirous, in 1858. It was during these apparitions (from February 11 to July 16) that Our Blessed Lady revealed herself as the “Immaculate Conception.”

March 3 *Feast of St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin*

Saint Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia on November 26, 1858. Her family was very wealthy, but she was taught to be especially concerned about the poor. When she grew up she turned her energies and fortune to helping the poor and forgotten. She worked with the African-American and Native-American people. In 1891, she began the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and became known as “Mother Katharine.” This community of sisters started schools, convents, and missionary churches. In 1925, they established Xavier University in New Orleans. Mother Katharine died on March 3, 1955 at the age of ninety-seven. She was declared *blessed* by Pope John Paul II on November 20, 1988. Pope John Paul II proclaimed her a *saint* on October 1, 2000.

March 17 *Memorial of St. Patrick, Bishop*

March 19 *Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary*

March 25 *Solemnity of the Annunciation Lk. 1:26-38*

April 25 *Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist*

May **1** *St. Joseph t*
May **3** *Feast of Saints Philip and James, Apostles*

May **14** *Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle*

After Jesus ascended into Heaven but before the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostles decided to chose someone to replace Judas as an Apostle. Besides being a person of good character, scripture specifies that the person had to have been with Jesus from the Baptism of John until the Ascension and had to be someone who could witness to the Resurrection. No mention is made of Matthias after his election. Tradition associates him with missionary activity and martyrdom in Ethiopia.

May **31** *Feast of the Visitation* Lk. 1:39-56

May (Variable) *The Immaculate Heart of Mary*

In the Gospel we read that Mary “treasured all things in her heart.” In 1944, Pope Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and recommended devotion to Mary’s Immaculate Heart. Although the world was at war when the Pope recommended renewed devotion to Mary, this devotion is not just for times of war but for all times.

June **24** *Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist*

June **29** *Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles*

July **1** *Blessed Junipero Serra, Priest*

Junipero Serra was born in 1713. When he grew up he studied to become a priest. After his ordination, he began his missionary work in Mexico and then in California. He found nine missions along the California coast from San Diego to San Francisco. He died in Monterey on August 28, 1784 and is buried in the mission church of St. Charles Borromeo, which he founded.

July **3** *Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle*

Thomas, the name means "twin," was a Galilean fisherman. With courage, Thomas volunteered to accompany Jesus to Bethany, where his friend Lazarus had died. This meant much danger to their lives since Bethany was near Jerusalem, and the Jews were anxious

to apprehend Jesus. Thomas is best known as "doubting Thomas" because he rejected the testimony of the other apostles that Jesus had risen from the dead. Eight days after Easter, Thomas made his public profession of faith in the Resurrection of Jesus. After Pentecost, he carried the Faith as far east as India and most likely suffered martyrdom there.

July **14** *Memorial of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, Virgin*

Kateri was born in 1646 in New York. Her father was an Iroquois chief; her mother, an Algonquin Christian. Kateri was baptized on Easter Sunday. Her baptismal name was "Catherine;" in the Iroquois tongue, "Kateri." Kateri dedicated her life to God and lived a celibate life. After a long period of physical suffering, she died in 1670 pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary. Kateri was only twenty-four years old.

Devotion to her, known as the *Lily of the Mohawks*, spread throughout Canada and the United States. Pope John Paul II declared her "blessed" on June 22, 1980.

July **16** *Our Lady of Mount Carmel*

Mount Carmel is located on the coast of Israel. This was the place where the prophet Elijah confronted the pagan prophets of Baal. Around 1154, the Order of Mt. Carmel was founded at this ancient shrine. This contemplative order, called Carmelites, began to celebrate its patronal feast on July 16. According to the tradition of the order, on that day in 1251, Mary appeared to St. Simon Stock, a Carmelite in England. She gave him the brown scapular as a sign of her love and protection. A full scapular is a long piece of cloth worn over a religious habit. Today a scapular may be a medal or two pieces of cloth connected by a cord. Carmelites and others who wear the scapular honor the Blessed Mother by wearing it.

July **22** *Memorial of St. Mary Magdalene*

July **25** *Feast of St. James, Apostle*

James is called the Greater, the brother of John the Evangelist, a son of Zebedee, and a Galilean fisherman. Jesus referred to James and John as "Sons of Thunder." James was present at the cure of Peter's mother-in-law; the raising of Jairus' daughter; the Transfiguration; and he was near Our Lord during the Agony in the Garden along with Peter and his brother John. It is believed that he preached the Gospel in Spain after Pentecost. James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa in Jerusalem in 44 A.D., making him the first Apostle to be martyred for Christ.

July **26** *Memorial of Saints Joachim and Ann, Parents of Mary*

Prayer

The Jesus Prayer

The **Jesus Prayer** is used as a “prayer word” simply by uttering the word “Jesus” or the phrase “Lord, Jesus, have mercy on me” in harmony with one’s breathing. This technique is a help to become “centered” or still within one’s being.

All the various activities in a child’s life can distract her/him from the important task of building a relationship with the all-holy, transcendent God. This *prayer form* is especially helpful if the classroom mood is restless or emotionally charged. It allows you and the children to become still, to become more aware of the Presence of God and to rest in that Presence.

Technique:

Address the children in words similar to these:

1. Let’s settle down and become very quiet so that we can experience God’s Presence here in this room, within us. God is as close to us as our own breath. Now close your eyes and take in a deep breath.
DO THIS WITH THE CHILDREN at this point.
Then, let it out very, very slowly.

2. Now let us breathe and pray all together.

Breath in. **PAUSE.** Breath out. **PAUSE.**
Breathe in and pray, “Jesus” or “Lord Jesus.”
Breathe out and pray, “have mercy on me.”

Repeat this as you continue to breathe.

Continue this exercise until you feel the room quiet. Then join the children entrusted to your care in prayer to the God who has loved them - and you - into being.

3. Time: Primary grades: 3 - 4 minutes
Intermediate: 4 - 5 minutes
Upper: 5 - 8 minutes

4. Other Prayer Words that could be used as a substitute:

“Lord Jesus - I love you.”

“Spirit of God - fill me with love.”

Feel free to use your favorite phrases.

Choral Speech (Praying in Common)

This *prayer form* invites all to pray as one voice in response to another through the use of selected religious readings or Scripture. The **Psalms** lend themselves to this type of reading.

To develop an understanding of praying in unison, or as reply to another, it is necessary to communicate a sense of rhythm by reading, singing within parts, speaking in different voices. Examples: “O” antiphons, Canticles (Magnificat, Benedictus), psalms, hymns, prayers, litanies, novena, etc.

Technique:

1. Make copies of the *choral reading* for each of the students.
2. Divide the children into groups and assign the parts to be read in unison rhythmically by each group.
3. Decide if any parts are to be read individually and assign those parts.

Song and Gesture

Singing is particularly popular with young children, but can be used when praying with children of all ages. Gesture helps the children to express their feelings through the use of body language. Combining song and gesture makes for a very expressive prayer form.

Technique:

- 1 Explain that gesture and song are acceptable *prayer forms*. Prayer is not just rote-recited prayers.
 2. Choose a song with gestures with which you are familiar. Listen to the song and teach the gestures to the class.
 3. Explain to the children that they are now going to create gestures of their own for a given song.
 4. Upon choosing an appropriate hymn for the liturgical season, divide the children into groups. Assign each group a verse of the hymn. Instruct the group to create their own gestures for the assigned verse or chorus.
 5. Have each group present their gestures to be learned by the entire class. This song can now be used during a prayer service.

Journal Keeping

This *prayer form* (tool) enables a student to reflect on the goals and directions of his/her life, and to appreciate and deepen a personal relationship with a loving Father. It provides a method to assess these experiences.

Technique: Grades 1 - 3

Journal Keeping could be adapted to the level of the student. Responses could be in written or picture form. Springboards to follow a religion lesson could be:

- How would you feel if you had been at the Last Supper?
- How do you think Jesus felt when His friends, the apostles, all walked away from Him?
- If you were blind, how would you feel if Jesus helped you to see? What would you say to Him?

Grades 4 - 8

- 1 Present the value of journal-keeping as a means of writing personal thoughts and feelings.

2. Differentiate “diary” from “journal.” A diary records personal thoughts and feelings; a journal records personal feelings and thoughts addressed to God as Father, Jesus as Brother, Friend.
3. There is no one particular format. Journaling may be in the form of an informal letter (Dear Father, from Your son/daughter), (Dear Jesus, from Your pal), or a poem, etc.
4. A copybook should be set aside for this special purpose. This helps to make it a special book for conversations with God.

Discuss the idea of a spiritual journey with students: one in which they will discover things about themselves and God. Ask them to think of pictures, symbols, and words that help them to think about God and the things He has created.

Decorate the cover with pictures and / or words which represent aspects of the student's self.

Discuss titles that would express the above discussion. Allow each student to design artistically a title page.

5. Establish a quiet atmosphere in the classroom for this special time. As a class, journal several times a week. However, students should feel free to use the journal at any time to express their thoughts and feelings to God.
6. Students need to be assured that no one will read their journals without permission. Periodic evaluation with students can take place to determine effectiveness of journaling.
7. Journaling is a student's personal response from a springboard initiated by the teacher. Such springboards can come from:
 - the Religion lesson (Is there enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian? What are some signs in your life?)
 - a particular Scripture passage
 - inspirational quotes, such as found on calendars, etc.
 - reflections on personal talents, gifts or on those shared with us by others (In your life who reminds you of God and makes you feel special?)
 - problems encountered by the age group or within your class, e.g., How does it feel to be left out of a group, to be ignored?

Meditation

Meditation is a form of mental prayer in which one thinks reflectively about God, the Blessed Mother, the saints, or the mysteries of faith.

Technique:

1. Select a Scripture passage. Choose one that is suggested in the Religion textbook.
2. Establish quiet time for approximately two or three minutes before the reading of the passage.
3. Read the passage slowly, aloud or softly. Repeat a word or phrase to capture the attention of the listener.
4. Allow about three or four minutes of quiet time to awaken feelings.
5. Respond with or without words. Remind students of different types of prayer, praise, love, thanksgiving, and petition.

Suggestions for Levels

Primary:

Stress that mental prayer or meditation is listening and talking quietly to God. Encourage students to listen to a selected Scripture story or view a slide presentation or audio-visual reflection. Children should be directed to think about what God is saying to them in this story. Encourage a short response such as the following:

Thank you, God.
I love you, God.
I am sorry, God, etc.

One acclamation should be selected by the child and repeated silently. Allow approximately three minutes for this prayer. Some may choose to share their response with others, to draw a picture of themselves in the Scripture story, or print their short response in their prayer notebook.

Intermediate:

Repeat all or any of the above.

Children may write their own prayer. They may volunteer to read their prayer. In order to keep the spirit of prayer, no more than one child's prayer should be read at a given time.

Junior High:

Use any of the above suggestions.

Follow - up activity: Write a modern day story which parallels the Scripture story.

Teacher would ask questions after the meditation such as: Whom would you like to be in the story? Why? What struck you about the story? Why?, etc.

Guided Meditation

Guided Meditation allows the children to consider a Bible verse. It encourages the children to consider their feelings and their relationship with God.

Technique:

1. Call the children to prayer, invite them to be still.
2. When they are still and quiet, invite the children to close their eyes. Remind them to listen very carefully and to try to keep their minds really focused on what you are going to read to them.
3. When they are quiet, read them the story of Jesus blessing the children (Matthew 19: 13 - 15). You may want to read it again after a short pause.
4. Allow a few minutes to pass. Then suggest the children imagine themselves as one of the children whom Jesus blessed. Encourage them to see themselves with Jesus, to imagine where they are. Suggest that they think about how it felt to be near Jesus, how it felt to be sent away from Jesus, and how it felt to be blessed by Jesus. Any ideas of your own would be great!

5. Allow a few minutes for children to consider this. Encourage the children to remember a time when they felt loved and blessed. Who was there? When did this happen? Where did his happen?
6. Older children may be more comfortable seated in a circle facing away from the center.
7. Many other gospel stories lend themselves to guided meditation. For example: The Ten Lepers, Jesus on the Road to Emmaus, or the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Follow Up:

Primary: Draw what you imagined. Write a prayer thanking Jesus for his blessing.

Intermediate: Discuss the blessings they have received. Write a prayer thanking God for these blessings.

Junior High: Journal their feelings during this meditation. Discuss times when you have not felt loved or blessed. Discuss how to help others feel loved and blessed.

Shared Prayer

This *prayer form* helps the students to become more aware and sensitive to God's presence in their lives and in the world around them and to aid them in responding to that presence by sharing prayer with others. This prayer may be spontaneous by having them respond to a few questions relating to a passage read from scripture, or it may take on a more structured format such as creating a litany or the format of the *Prayer of the Faithful* in the Eucharistic Liturgy.

Technique:

1. Take the time to create a prayerful environment; if possible darken the room,

have a lit candle. In some way, make a conscious effort to change the area from what the students ordinarily experience. Prepare the students by setting a tone of quiet reverence.

2. For **Intermediate** or **Junior High** levels select one of the students to do the reading of the Scripture passage. Give him/her the selection ahead of time and have him/her carefully prepare, read slowly, etc. For **Primary** levels, it may be best to do the reading yourself. You may want to use a children's Bible for easier understanding.
3. During the Lenten Season, we take on a new awareness of Jesus' life in the light of His passion, death, and His new life in glory. Select a passage from one of the Gospels on the passion of Jesus.
4. Allow for a period of silent reflection following the reading.
5. For **Primary** levels, prepare beforehand materials needed for drawing: paper, crayons, markers, etc. Have the children draw a picture of the story and then describe what they drew. You may aid them by asking a few questions, e.g. How do you think Jesus felt when the crowd mocked him and his close friends deserted him? Have they ever felt that no one cared?
6. For the **Intermediate** and **Junior High** levels, prior to the prayer experience, it will be necessary to prepare the students by familiarizing them with the formula used for the *General Intercessions* at Mass.
7. Help them to move from the time of Jesus to our own time. In the reflection on the passion of Jesus we are able to see that we are not alone in our suffering. When we condemn others because of race, color, or religion we are repeating the action of Pilate. Mary's sorrow today is shared by the families of sons and daughters of all the war-torn nations of the world. Reflected in Jesus' innocence is the innocent children in famine-afflicted countries, etc.
8. Invite them to write a prayer about one of the many concerns of our world today. These can be put together to be used as a *Prayer of the Faithful*.