

GRADE 7

PARENT PAGE



Parents have the unique responsibility for the education of their children; they are the first educators or catechists. They teach by their witness of the faith, through their values and attitudes, by their Christian example of love for Christ and his church. When children are baptized, parents accept the responsibility to raise their children in the practice of the faith...(National Directory for Catechesis 234-235)

Dear Parents,

In a special document entitled *Letter to Families*, Pope John Paul II wrote: “Parents are the first and most important educators of their own children, and they also possess a fundamental competence in this area; they are educators because they are parents” (16). You are the first and best role model for your child in these growing years. Your role as parent to love, teach, and lead your child to Jesus is a remarkable and noble vocation. Congratulations and Thank You for accepting and honoring this God-given role.

At this particular stage of development, first graders are enthusiastic and eager to learn and to socialize. They have a growing desire to interact with peers, but often do not possess the social skills necessary to avoid and resolve conflicts. They are beginning to understand that other people are different from themselves and need to be guided in growth of acceptance of others. Learning to act with respect and responsibility towards others is an important task at this stage, and the need for love, support and approval from parents and other significant adults is real. Attitudes and values that are held within the family shape the child’s perception of the world and influence their understanding and experiences.

Your Child’s Faith Development

Like other stages of development, your first-grader’s faith development is important. Although children at every developmental level have many characteristics in common, each child is unique and will not fit entirely into any model developed. Keep in mind then that your child will come to know and understand the faith at his or her own rate of development. However here are some general points to remember. Children at this age:

- † Grow in their relationship with God particularly through prayer based on life experience
- † Accept attitudes of parents, teachers, the Church, and other social institutions toward differences in people
- † Vest great authority in parents and other trusted adults
- † Desire to join in the ritual of the parish community as seen in the desire to participate in the sacraments
- † Need help in formation of conscience
- † Begin to sort out reality from imagination based on practical experience
- † Need concrete experiences to understand concepts and religious truths
- † Use classes and categories to order actions around them
- † Can begin to project themselves imaginatively into the position/situation of others
- † Begin to order the religious world

- † View rules as inflexible
- † Understand reality best in story form
- † Identify with heroes and heroines of the Bible
- † Identify with stories of the Church (lives of the saints for example)
- † Desire to learn about people and their differences
- † In this coming year our goal is to work together with you to bring your child to a deeper understanding of: 1) God our Father and the ways that He shows His love for us through the many gifts of creation; 2) Jesus, God's Son and our brother, who teaches us about the Father and sends the Holy Spirit to be our helper; and 3) how we become members of the Catholic Church through baptism. We will use the best practices that we know to communicate these truths to your child, and in turn hope that you will always remember that there is no greater influence on your child's faith development than you. We will work together to ensure that this will be a year of growth for your child in his/her faith and relationship with Jesus! Thank You in advance and God Bless!

Below are some of the highlights of what your child will be learning this year:

- There are three persons in the Blessed Trinity
- God is a loving Father and the loving Creator of all things
- Jesus is the Son of God, our brother and teacher
- The Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus to give us gifts of peace, strength and joy.
- Through baptism we are made sons and daughters of God and we become part of God's family.
- God's family includes people of every race, age, culture and ability.
- We belong to the Catholic Church.
- The Eucharist is both a special meal that Jesus shares with us and a sacrifice of his love.
- God always forgives us if we ask and are sorry; God gave us a special sacrament of penance.
- Mary is the Mother of Jesus and Joseph is his foster father.
- Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus and Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.

How You Can Help Your Child Grow in Faith

Here are several points that will aid you in helping your child grow in his/her faith.

- Attend and participate in Sunday Mass as a family.
- Participate in special events with the parish such as the patron saint's feast, holiday customs and blessings.
- Help your child to learn and participate in various types of prayer (i.e. quiet reflection, guided meditation, song, spontaneous, petition, thanksgiving, praise and sorrow).
- Help your child to learn and pray formal prayers: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Prayer before and after meals, Angel of God.
- Help your child to pray spontaneous prayers (i.e. talking to God in their own words).
- Participate in activities for advent and lent to appreciate the significance of these liturgical seasons – e.g. advent wreath, stations-of-the-cross for children.
- Explore ways we can show care for all of God's creation.
- Talk with your child to help them understand that we must love ALL peoples, even those who are different from us.
- Discuss the lives of the saints with your children so that they may see examples of people who lived lives of holiness and service in God's name.
- Read Scripture stories together, some good suggestions are:

Creation – Genesis 1:1-2:4
Epiphany – Matthew 2:9b-11

Annunciation – Luke 1:26-56
Good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37

Nativity – Luke 2:1-20
Zaccheaus – Luke 19:1-10

Finding in the Temple – Luke 2:40-52

Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem – Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus Blesses the Children – Mark 10:13-16

Last Supper – Matthew 26:26-29 or Luke 22:14-20

Lord's Prayer – Luke 11:1-4

Resurrection – John 20:1-18

→ Help your child to become familiar with the following terms:

Advent	altar	Baptism	Bible	Catholic	Christ	Christian	Christmas
Church	create	Family	forgiveness	God	godparent	Holy Spirit	Jesus
Joseph	Lent	Mary	Mass	Parish	prayer	priest	Saint
Easter	Good Friday	angel					

In order to understand the Catholic faith more fully every family should have a copy of the Bible, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, and the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Grade 7

BACKGROUND FOR CATECHISTS

Know Your Audience

Just like Jesus, every good catechist knows their audience.

“The catechist – must take into consideration all the human factors of a particular age level in order to present the Gospel message in a vital and compelling way.” (NDC #48)

Who Are Your First Graders?

Faith Development

Children at this age:

1. Grow in their relationship with God particularly through prayer based on life experience
2. Vest great authority in parents and other trusted adults
3. Desire to join in the ritual of the parish community as seen in the desire to participate in Penance and Eucharist
4. Need help in formation of conscience
5. Begin to sort out reality from imagination based on practical experience
6. Need concrete experiences to understand concepts and religious truths
7. Use classes and categories to order actions around them
8. Can begin to project themselves imaginatively into the position/situation of others
9. Begin to order the religious world
10. View rules as inflexible
11. Understand reality best in story form
12. Identify with heroes and heroines of the Bible
13. Identify with stories of the Church (lives of the saints for example)
14. Desire to learn about people and their differences
15. Accept attitudes of parents, teachers, the Church, and other social institutions toward differences in people

GRADE 1 CATECHISTS

Guiding Principles

Catechists should:

1. Help the children begin to acquire basic spiritual attitudes through the expression of gestures, since children relate readily to the language of symbols and gestures. Provide frequent opportunities for the children to engage in ritual: i.e. processions, offerings, praising, and thanking God in prayer and song.
2. Help the children move from a moral stage known as self-interest. Endeavor to awaken in them an awareness of the needs and feelings of others. Invite them to reach out to others in love and concern.
3. Help the children acquire an image of God through the stories you read and tell. Images later become more mature concepts and feelings about God. Emphasize the love and providence of God and God's faithfulness by using scripture stories.
4. Provide examples of one who is conscious of God's presence in the world, in his or her life; of one who is joyful, and of one who is ever striving to follow Christ more closely. Remember children at this age tend to imitate others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children at this age:

1. Tire easily physically and intellectually.
2. Have short attention spans.
3. Are very active.
4. Prefer play over work.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children at this age:

1. Are centered on "self"; need help in developing relationships; seek to identify self as unique individuals in family, school, and world.
2. Use "me" a great deal, want desires fulfilled in a short time; only beginning to understand the concept of "our".

3. Need boundaries of respect and responsibility set, need to be encouraged to share.
4. Grow by identifying with adults who must "model" for child.
5. Exhibit curiosity and enthusiasm.
6. Open and eager to tell about family; need sensitivity to family situations.
7. May have developed social skills because of preschool environment.
8. May give "windows to what is within them" through their drawings.
9. Boys and girls may prefer to sit, work, play in separate groups.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Children at this age:

1. Can usually think logically about concrete, real objects or personal experience.
2. Learn best by doing, showing, and experiencing.
3. Exhibit difficulty in reversing their thought processes in order to give the reasons that may have led up to a conclusion.
4. Have an excellent facility for memorizing, especially musical or rhyming refrains.

NOTES

1. Pope John Paul II in **On Catechesis in Our Time** encourages the use of advances in pedagogy; biology, sociology as they help us to model God's Divine Pedagogy (teaching us gradually in stages according to our level of development). The above noted information is consistent with such documents as the *General Directory for Catechesis*, the *National Directory for Catechesis*, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and other Catechetical Documents of the Church.
2. The above sciences have limitations. While this information does provide references to typical age ranges, children continue to be viewed as individuals and individual differences need to be taken into account.

First Grade

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Theme: The LOVE of God the Father as shown through creation and the KNOWLEDGE of God the Father as taught by Jesus, God's Son and our brother; our own initiation through Baptism and special assistance from the Holy Spirit.

The Catechist should:

- **Make copies of the Parent Page (front and back) for students to take home.**
- **Read the Background for Catechists Information.**
- **Become familiar with the *National Directory for Catechesis* & the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*.**

AT THE END OF THIS GRADE LEVEL STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDINGS AND APPRECIATION OF THE EXPERIENCES INDICATED.

[Note about symbols: Of the six tasks of catechesis (knowledge of the faith; liturgy & sacraments; moral formation; prayer; community; missionary spirit) five have a symbol assigned to them. Knowledge of the Faith is the organizing task]

Symbol Key:


 = Liturgy & Sacraments  = Moral Formation  = Prayer  = Community  = Missionary Spirit


Reference Code: CCC = *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
Compendium = *Compendium to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*
USCCA = *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*


KNOWLEDGE OF THE FAITH

1. God is a loving Father.

CCC #239; Compendium # 42; USCCA pp 51-52

 - Students will understand ways that God has shown us love.


 - Students will participate in different forms of prayer, i.e., quiet reflection, guided meditation, song, spontaneous, petition, thanksgiving, praise, and sorrow.

 - Students will become aware of the ways people care for us.

Luke 11:1-4 ... Lord's Prayer Vocabulary: God *Teach the Our Father*

2. There are three persons in the Blessed Trinity.

CCC #253-255; Compendium #48; USCCA pp 51-53

 - Students will participate in weekly prayer. Participate in different forms of prayer, i.e., quiet reflection, guided meditation, song, spontaneous, petition, thanksgiving, praise, and sorrow.


Matthew 3:13-17...the Baptism of Jesus Vocabulary: prayer


Teach the Sign of the Cross and the Glory Be


Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed


3. God is the loving Creator of all things.

CCC #293, 338; Compendium #53, 62; USCCA pp 53-54

 - Students will be aware of God's creation and recognize ourselves as unique and special parts of creation.

 - Students will learn the Angel of God prayer.

 - Students will participate in prayer services celebrating: God's creation, baptism, and forgiveness.


 - Students will explore ways we can show we care for all of God's creation.


Genesis 1:1-2:4... Creation

Vocabulary: create, God

4. Jesus is the Son of God, our brother, and teacher.

CCC #240, 422, 427, 458, 2782; Compendium #46, 79, 80, 85, 583; USCCA pp 79-80

 - Students will value Jesus as a model for the way we all should live.

 - Students will participate in different forms of prayer, i.e., quiet reflection, guided meditation, song, spontaneous, petition, thanksgiving, praise, and sorrow.

Luke 1:26-56 ... Annunciation

Vocabulary: Jesus, Christ, bible

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed

5. The Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus to give us gifts of peace, strength, and joy.

CCC #728-730, 736; Compendium #140, 145; USCCA pp 102-109

✚ - Students will participate in different forms of prayer, i.e., quiet reflection, guided meditation, song, spontaneous, petition, thanksgiving, praise, and sorrow.



-Students will understand saints as people who lived lives of holiness and service In God's name.

Luke 24:49... Pentecost/Holy Spirit

Vocabulary: Holy Spirit

Introduce the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit

6. Through baptism we are made sons and daughters of God and we become part of God's family.

CCC #804, 1213, 1267; Compendium #153- 154, 252, 263-264; USCCA pp 192, 197



- Students will become aware that baptism makes us part of the larger family of God. Develop a sense of belonging to our parish community.

✚ - Students will participate in prayer services celebrating: God's creation, baptism, and forgiveness.

Mark 10:13-16... Jesus Blesses the Children

Vocabulary: baptism, godparent, Christian

7. Jesus tells his followers to love one another.

CCC # 459, 1823; Compendium #388, 435

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed

8. We can grow to become loving parents, single people, priests, brothers or sisters.

CCC #825; Compendium #165; USCCA pp 452



- Students will become aware of ministries in the parish, i.e., pastor, parochial vicar, director for religious education, catechist, lector, cantor, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, altar server.



- Students will understand saints as people who lived lives of holiness and service in God's name. Become aware of the ways people care for us.



- Students will understand the priest as the person chosen by God to represent Christ in the Church and who leads us in prayer at Mass.

Vocabulary: Christian, priest, family

9. God's family includes people of every race, age, culture, and ability.

CCC #225, 360, 361, 775-776, 1934-1935; Compendium #43, 68, 152, 412; USCCA pp 325-327



- Students will understand that we must love ALL people, even those who are different from us. Understand saints as people who lived lives of holiness and service in God's name.

Luke 10:25-37... Good Samaritan

Vocabulary: Church

Have students try to memorize the Great Commandments

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed

10. Special parts of the Church are the crucifix, altar, tabernacle, baptismal font, holy water font, reconciliation rooms or confessionals.


CCC #1182-1185; Compendium #246; USCCA pp. 295-96


Vocabulary: altar, tabernacle


Plan a visit to your church or a historical church in the area

11. We belong to the Catholic Church.

CCC #830-833; Compendium #166-167; USCCA pp 129-132

 - Students will develop a sense of belonging to our parish community. Appreciate the different groups to which we belong. Participate in special events with the parish such as the patron saint's feast, holiday customs, and blessings.

 - Students will participate in formal prayer.

 - Students will become aware of the ways people care for us.

Vocabulary: Catholic, parish, family

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed

12. The Eucharist is both a special meal that Jesus shares with us and a sacrifice of his love.

CCC #1382-1383; Compendium #287-288; USCCA pp 220-233

✚ - Students will participate with all other Catholics in Sunday Mass where we hear God's Word and share the body and blood of Jesus. Understand the priest as the person chosen by God to represent Christ in the Church and who leads us in prayer at Mass.

Matthew 26:26-29... Last Supper

Vocabulary: Mass

13. During the Eucharist (Mass), we remember what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper before he suffered and died for us on the cross.

CCC #1365; Compendium # 280; USCCA pp 235-237

✚ - Students will participate in formal prayer.

Luke 22:14-20... Last Supper

Vocabulary: last supper, priest

14. During the Mass, Jesus is with us in a special way.

CCC #1373; Compendium #282; USCCA pp 223-22



- Students will become aware of the ways people care for us.

Vocabulary: Mass

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed

15. God gave us the Ten Commandments to show us how we are to love Him and one another.

CCC #2055, 2083; Compendium #434-436

16. God gave us the Ten Commandments to show us how we are to love Him and one another.

CCC #2055, 2083; Compendium #434-436

17. God always forgives us if we ask and are sorry; God gave us a special sacrament of Penance.

CCC #1431, 1432, 1439, 1847; Compendium # 300-301, 391; USCCA pp 235-237

✠ - Students will participate in prayer services celebrating: God's creation, baptism, and forgiveness.

Vocabulary: forgiveness

18. Reconciliation is a special way God shows his love and forgiveness.

CCC #1422, 1440; Compendium #296, 302; USCCA pp 236-237

✠ - Students will participate in prayer services celebrating: God's creation, baptism, and forgiveness.



-Students will become aware of the ways people care for us.

Luke 19:1-10.... Zaccheaus

Vocabulary: forgiveness

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed



- Students will participate in special events with the parish such as the patron saint's feast, holiday customs, and blessings.

Luke 2:1-20... Nativity

Vocabulary: advent, Christmas

Talk about Angels

22. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.

CCC #640, 642, 1169; Compendium #126-127, 242; USCCA pp 364, 510



- Students will participate in activities for Advent and Lent to appreciate the significance of these liturgical seasons, e.g., Advent wreath, stations of the cross for children.



- Students will participate in Advent and Lenten activities that reach out to the wider community.



- Students will participate in special events with the parish such as the patron saint's feast, holiday customs, and blessings.

John 20:1-18 ... Jesus Rises from the Dead and Appears to the Disciples

Vocabulary: Lent, Easter

STUDENTS SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYERS

Sign of the Cross
Our Father
Hail Mary
Angel of God

Glory Be
Prayer before and after meals
Spontaneous prayer

Textbook Chapter	Date to Teach	Date Completed