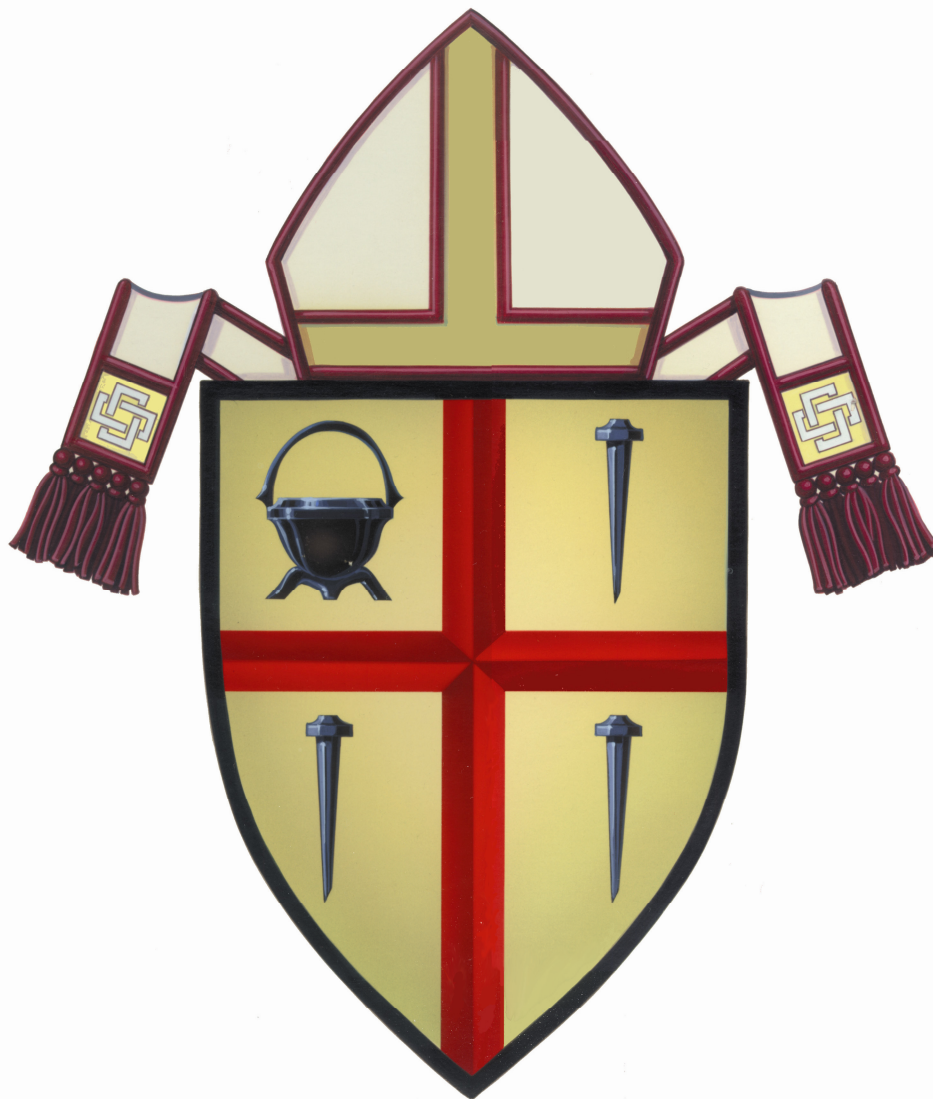


Diocese of San Diego



Catechetical Standards

Diocese of San Diego Catechetical Guidelines

Introduction

Clear and realistic expectations are important for everyone involved in the process of helping children and youth grow in faith and in an understanding of the Catholic Tradition—what we believe, how we live, how we pray and celebrate. Diocesan Catechetical Standards will allow pastors, directors of catechetical ministries, coordinators, catechists, parents and the entire parish to see what is expected at each level and enable them to contribute to the faith formation process. They will also promote consistency in catechetical programs across the diocese.

The partnership of home and parish is the ground for nurturing faith. Diocesan Catechetical Standards will strengthen the partnership between the primary educators of children, their parents, and the supporting educators, pastors and catechists, so that children and youth will develop life-giving relationships with Christ and His Church.

Seven categories have been identified for the formation in the Catholic faith for primary, adolescents and youth. Each category includes specific grade level competencies that every child/youth should know and be able to demonstrate. Through the level standards, the curriculum will be based on stated and desired competencies.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Diocese of San Jose, California for their three years of work on developing these competencies and allowing other dioceses to adopt them. The basis of their work came from:

- Religion Curriculum Student Outcomes from the Department of Education, DSJ
- Sowing the Seeds of Faith—NCCL, Loyola Press, 2000
- Religion Curriculum Guidelines, Diocese of Orange, CA
- Religious Education Standards, Diocese of Madison, WI

All of the above resources are solidly based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The San Jose diocesan level standards committee included Donna Brock (chairperson), Rev. Diarmuid Casey, Grace Chen, Jeanne Gaffney, Sr. Fidelma Heeran, Joy Hill, Jeannine Leichner, Paula Liu-Smith, Marge Ryan, Wendy Scherbart and Lupita Vital in consultation with the catechetical leaders of the Diocese of San Jose.

Sincerely,
Mary Jo Waggoner, Director

*PRIMARY
AGES 6-8*

- Form an image of God from the important people in their lives.
 - Need to have concepts and facts presented one at a time.
 - Experience God's love through prayer and interaction with others.
 - Enjoy song, ritual and humor.
 - Need to learn cooperation with peers.
 - Require a variety of activities due to a short attention span.
 - Need to learn in an atmosphere of trust and personal acceptance.
-

*INTERMEDIATE
AGES 9-11*

- Learn faith identity through community customs and traditions.
 - See God as judge and lawgiver due to their sense of fair play.
 - Tend to be conformists and identify strongly with their peer group.
 - Experience the beginnings of sexual awareness.
 - Begin to think abstractly and have longer attention spans.
 - Are curious and independent.
 - Have a wide range of interests.
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*YOUNG ADOLESCENTS
AGES 12-14*

- Learn faith identity through experience of community customs and traditions.
- Are in a period of rapid growth: physical, mental and emotional.
- May experience awkwardness, uncertainty and self-consciousness.
- Changes from a strong interest in the group to an interest in one or two "best" friends.
- Find peer acceptance more important than adult approval.
- Experience an increase in sexual awareness.
- Are capable of reflective thinking.

PRIMARY CHILDREN ages 6-8

DOCTRINE

SCRIPTURE

1st GRADE

- Recognize that God is the creator of all things, Jesus is the Son of God and the Holy Spirit is a gift of Jesus sent to be with us always.
- Identify and honor Mary as the mother of Jesus.

2nd GRADE

- Describe God as loving and merciful.
- Describe how the Holy Spirit can help us to know right from wrong.
- Describe how sin hurts God, others and ourselves
- Tell that, at Mass, we remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.
- State that Jesus is really present in the Eucharist.

3rd GRADE

- Identify the mystery of the Trinity, one God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Demonstrate understanding that God, the Father, takes care of us and is always faithful to us.
- Demonstrate an understanding that Jesus, God's son, is both human and divine.
- Demonstrate understanding that the Holy Spirit continues to dwell in our hearts and guides us.
- Identify the Apostles' Creed as a summary of our faith.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Nicene Creed and how it is part of our liturgy.
- Name the pope, the bishop and the pastor and describe their role in the church.
- Identify Mary as the mother of God and the Church.
- Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the lives of the saints

1st GRADE

- Demonstrate reverence for the Bible as the Word of God.
- Demonstrate knowledge that the readings at Mass come from the Bible
- Retell the Bible stores of creation, the birth of Jesus and the Easter story.

2nd GRADE

- Demonstrate familiarity with the stories of forgiveness in the Gospels, ie. the Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep and Zacchaeus.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the meal stories in the Gospels, ie, the Wedding Feast at Cana, the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, the Last Supper.
- Listen to the story of Mary saying "yes" to God and describe ways in which they can say "yes" to God.

3rd GRADE

- Demonstrate a knowledge that the Bible is divided into two main sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- Describe the Old Testament as the story of God's faithful relationship with his chosen people, the Jews.
- Demonstrate an understanding of God's covenant with Abraham and what this means to us.
- Describe the Gospels as the story of Jesus and His disciples who show us how to love God and others.

PRIMARY CHILDREN ages 6-8

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

1st GRADE

- Tell that Baptism makes us children of God and welcomes us into the Christian family as followers of Jesus.
- Identify water as the primary symbol of Baptism.
- Recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Baptism.
- Talk about their experience of participation in the Sunday Liturgy with the community.
- Demonstrate reverence for the church building as a sacred place.

2nd GRADE

- Recall that Sacraments are signs of God's love for us in which we receive God's grace.
- Describe the term 'grace' as the gift of God's love, which enables us to live good Christian lives.
- Talk about the Sacrament of Reconciliation as an opportunity to celebrate God's love and forgiveness of sin.
- Describe the Sacrament of Eucharist as a prayer of the community that gives thanks and praise to God.
- Connect the story of the Last Supper with the celebration of the Mass.
- Tell that at Mass the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ and offered to us as a sign of God's love in Holy Communion.
- Describe how participation in Mass and prayer unites us in the Body of Christ.

3rd GRADE

- Recite the names of the seven Sacraments.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how the liturgical year helps to remind us of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.
- Name the four ways that Christ is present in the celebration of the Eucharist.
- Give examples of how to actively participate in the celebration of the Eucharist.

MORAL FORMATION

1st GRADE

- Recognize that Jesus teaches and shows us how to love God and to love our neighbor.
- Recognize that their own behavior affects others.
- Describe that the Church is God's family and it is our responsibility to help each other to be holy.
- Recognize the importance of caring for their bodies as a gift from God.

2nd GRADE

- Recite the two Great Commandments: the love of God and love of neighbor.
- Examine the effects of their own behavior in family and group settings.
- Discuss and practice ways to stand up for what is right.
- Explain that everyone deserves respect because they are made in the image of God.

3rd GRADE

- Recognize situations of injustice in their own lives and suggest responses.
- Discuss the meaning of respect for one's own body and give examples.

PRIMARY CHILDREN ages 6-8

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

1st GRADE

- Tell ways that God shows love for them.
- Describe prayer as talking with and listening to God.
- Quiet themselves for prayer.
- Say a personal prayer of thanksgiving.
- Show that they can pray daily.

2nd GRADE

- Express their love of God and others through prayer and action.
- Express their love of Jesus through the reception of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- Pray a spontaneous prayer.
- Describe the difference between communal and personal prayer.

3rd GRADE

- Express the importance of and participate in the celebrations and practices of the liturgical seasons.
- Assume different roles in communal prayer.
- Recognize and appreciate different cultural experiences of Catholicism.
- Compose prayers for different occasions.

TO BE LEARNED BY HEART

1st GRADE

- Say the Sign of the Cross.
- Say the Hail Mary.
- Say the Lord's Prayer.

2nd GRADE

- Say an Act of Contrition.
- Say the Glory Be.
- Be familiar with and be able to participate in the Mass responses.

3rd GRADE

- Say the Blessing Before Meals and After Meals.
- Say the Apostles' Creed.
- Say morning and evening prayers.

SERVICE/MISSION

1st GRADE

- Describe ways to serve others in imitation of Jesus.
- Give examples and take action on ways to care for and respect God's gift of creation.

2nd GRADE

- Discuss ways they can put their love of others into action (service) with God's help.
- Participate in a group project that provides service to others.
- Explain that at the end of Mass we are sent out to share Jesus' love with others.
- Demonstrate understanding of our responsibility to support our church community.

3rd GRADE

- Tell stories of Jesus' service to others and share ways they can imitate him.
- Demonstrate an understanding that through our Baptism, we share in Jesus' mission to care for the poor and victims of injustice.
- Plan and participate in a service project.
- Describe the roles of the Pope, bishops, priests and deacons in service to the community.

INTERMEDIATE CHILDREN 9-11

DOCTRINE

4th GRADE

- Recognize that Jesus is the visible sign of God's love and the Church is the visible sign of Jesus.
- Describe how the Holy Spirit guides the Church.
- Explain how the powers of the gifts of the Holy Spirit help us.
- Demonstrate understanding of the Beatitudes as our way of building the kingdom of God.

5th GRADE

- Explain that Christians believe Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah sent to save us.
- Explain that the purpose of Christian life is to know, love and serve God and to live forever with God in heaven.
- Define the term "revelation" and give examples of God's revelation to people through the ages.
- Explain the Church as the "People of God" and the "Body of Christ".
- Explain the teaching authority of the magisterium.
- Explain the meaning of "communion of saints".
- Demonstrate an understanding that we are called to participate in bringing about the Kingdom of God.

6th GRADE

- Explain that faith is God's gift and our lifelong response to God who calls all people into a loving relationship with God's self.
- Explain that a creed is a pledge of belief in the central truths of our faith.
- Demonstrate an understanding of God's revelation through Scripture and Tradition and in our lives.
- Demonstrate an understanding that the creation stories in the Bible are not scientific accounts, but are intended to teach important truths of our faith: there is only one God; all of creation was made by God who is good and loving; human beings are created by God in God's image and likeness, with intellect and free will.

SCRIPTURE

4th GRADE

- Identify selected psalms as songs of praise, thanksgiving, petition and lament.
- Name the books found in the New Testament: the four gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; the letters of the Apostles, the Acts of the Apostles and Revelation.
- Recognize Scripture as the source for the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the Corporal Works of Mercy.
- Find chapter and verse in the Bible.

5th GRADE

- Explain that God speaks to us in the Liturgy of the Word.
- Explain that the Law, the Torah and the Pentateuch all refer to the first five books of the Bible.
- Apply the meaning of God's message in selected Sunday readings.
- Explain the relationship between the Bible and the Lectionary used at Mass.

6th GRADE

- Demonstrate knowledge that authors of the Bible used many different ways to convey God's message.
- Name major figures in the development of God's relationship with the chosen people: Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, etc..
- Explain the importance of the Exodus to the Israelites.
- Demonstrate knowledge that the Old Testament is fulfilled in Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament.
- Demonstrate the ability to relate Scripture to one's life.

INTERMEDIATE CHILDREN 9-11

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

4th GRADE

- Demonstrate an understanding that Mass is the central celebration for all God's people.
- Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for the major movements of the Mass.
- Identify objects in the church building by name, location and purpose.
- Name the Holy Days of Obligation and explain why we celebrate them.

5th GRADE

- Explain why the Triduum is the central liturgical celebration of the year.
- Identify that Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are Sacraments of Initiation.
- Identify that Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are Sacraments of Healing.
- Identify that Matrimony and Holy Orders are Sacraments of Service to the community.
- Describe the roles of bishops, priests and deacons.
- Demonstrate an understanding that the Church is a worshipping community enriched by the Sacraments and the work of the Holy Spirit.

6th GRADE

- Discuss the meaning of the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation and their relationship.
- Describe the scriptural origins of sacramental actions in the Sacraments of Initiation.
- Discuss similarities between the Passover meal and Eucharist.
- Describe the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.
- Explain the meaning of the church's feast of Pentecost.
- Describe the ways to prepare for the celebration of the Mass.
- Discuss the different ways people live out their Baptismal call to holiness (married life, ordained life, professed life and single life).

MORAL FORMATION

4th GRADE

- Recite and practice the Corporal Works of Mercy.
- Give examples of how to live the Beatitudes.
- Explain how Jesus' command to "love one another" applies to their own lives.
- Recite and explain each of the Ten Commandments.
- Demonstrate an understanding that sin is the greatest obstacle we face in our efforts to love God and neighbor.

5th GRADE

- Discuss the consequences of sin in their own lives and in the life of their community.
- Share stories that demonstrate how to live their faith at home, work, school, sports and social activities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the community as a source of guidance, support and challenge for moral living.
- Identify at least five saints, including their own patron saint, and describe a virtue they can imitate of each saint.

6th GRADE

- Give examples of the effects of sin in the larger global community.
- Explain how one forms one's conscience.
- Demonstrate understanding of the Holy Spirit in conscience formation.
- Identify challenging moral issues and discuss how Christ's disciples respond to them.
- Identify and explain "The Precepts of the Catholic Church".
- Apply the virtues of prudence and temperance to dress and speech.

INTERMEDIATE CHILDREN 9-11

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

4th GRADE

- Describe what it means to be holy and ways they can become holy.
- Reflect on the Stations of the Cross.
- Reflect on the meaning of the Act of Contrition.
- Describe and identify the five forms of prayer and give examples.
- Compose their own prayers.

5th GRADE

- Identify five commonly used sacramentals and explain how they remind us of our relationship with Jesus.
- Express reverence and use appropriate gestures, postures and responses in liturgical celebrations.
- Practice meditative prayer.
- Discuss the importance and challenges of being faithful to daily prayer.

6th GRADE

- Examine their consciences to evaluate their relationships with God, self, the environment and others.
- Participate in the Sacraments of Reconciliation.
- Demonstrate an understanding of different styles of prayer and recognize which style they prefer.
- Set aside time to pray daily.
- Express the importance of being quiet in order to listen to God.
- Pray the Psalms.

TO BE LEARNED BY HEART

4th GRADE

- Say the Nicene Creed.
- Pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.
- Recite the Ten Commandments.

5th GRADE

- Say the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity.
- Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.
- Name the major celebrations and seasons of the Church year.

6th GRADE

- Pray the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.
- Recite the Apostles Creed.
- Recite the Moral and Theological Virtues.

SERVICE/MISSION

4th GRADE

- Plan, participate in and reflect on their experience of a service project.
- Describe stewardship and give examples of how they can participate.
- Recognize one's own talents and how to use them for the good of the community.

5th GRADE

- Describe gospel passages that show Jesus as a person of service.
- Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.
- Plan and participate in a parish service project and reflect on its purpose.
- Describe the roles of the laity in Church leadership and ministry.

6th GRADE

- Identify how they can practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.
- Plan and participate in a group service that meets the needs of the community and discuss its connection with the Gospel.
- Identify prophets of the Bible who spoke out against injustice and suffering and discuss how we are called to be prophetic in our day.
- Give examples of how Christians are instruments of God's grace to others.
- Give examples of the Church's contemporary missionary service in the United States and in other countries.

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS ages 12-14

DOCTRINE

7th GRADE

- Discuss the statements in the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed and relate them to our lives.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the terms of grace and salvation.
- Describe some of the key differences and similarities between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant Churches.
- Demonstrate respect for the great religions of the world.
- Demonstrate understanding of the Paschal mystery as the birth, life, death and resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.
- Recognize Mary as the perfect model of Christian discipleship.

8th GRADE

- Discuss how believing in Jesus, as the Son of God and their savior, makes a difference in their lives.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the origin of the church and its mission.
- Explain how ordained ministers continue the work of the Apostles.
- Give an example of how the Paschal Mystery relates to our lives.

SCRIPTURE

7th GRADE

- Name and explain the significance of the major stories in salvation history.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the call to discipleship as lived by Mary and the Apostles.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the demands of discipleship as found in the Sermon on the Mount.
- Identify the 46 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament.

8th GRADE

- Explain how Catholics understand divine inspiration of the Bible.
- Explain why we say that Scripture is God's living Word.
- Demonstrate knowledge that the Christian Scriptures reveal the Paschal Mystery and saving action of Jesus Christ.

SACRAMENTS AND LITURGY

7th GRADE

- Explain the meaning of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Discuss the value of participating in a communal reconciliation service during Advent and Lent.
- Discuss the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick as an opportunity to bring Jesus' healing comfort and strength to those who are severely ill, elderly or in danger of death.
- Discuss the importance of commitment in the Sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders.
- Demonstrate awareness that by participating in the celebration of the Eucharist, we share in the Paschal Mystery.
- Understand and explain the Eucharistic Liturgy as sacrifice and sacred meal.

8th GRADE

- Name each of the Sacraments, their symbolic actions and what is celebrated.
- Name the specific parts and order of the Mass and be able to participate in the responses.
- Explain how sacraments are connected to the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments.
- Describe how the Sacraments celebrate the presence of Jesus Christ in important life experiences.
- Explain the role and action of the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments.
- Explain the value of celebrating the Sacraments as a faith community.

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS ages 12-14

MORAL FORMATION

7th GRADE

- Explain the importance of forming one's conscience according to the Word of God and the teaching of the Church.
- Describe a process of making a moral decision.
- Explain the importance of prayer in reaching a moral decision.

8th GRADE

- Demonstrate the ability to respond to moral dilemmas in light of Scripture and the Church's teachings.
- Identify situations of social injustice and how the Church's disciples respond to them.
- Explain the Catholic Church's teaching on human sexuality.
- Explain how the Church's disciples respect on the dignity of human life at all ages.

SERVICE/MISSION

7th GRADE

- Plan and participate in a group service activity that addresses current global issues.
- Identify the difficulties and challenges in today's culture for putting their faith into action.
- Discuss the various opportunities for service within the vocations of the single, married, religious and ordained.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of catholic social teachings and to apply them to situations of injustice in society.
- Discuss that how we carry out our civic responsibilities is related to living our faith.

8th GRADE

- Participate in and reflect on service activities and how these activities helped them to grow in faith.
- Describe the dimensions of stewardship.
- Reflect on their gifts and talents that can be used in stewardship.
- Describe the evangelizing mission of the Church and explain their responsibility to be evangelizers.

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

7th GRADE

- Pray and reflect through journaling (writing or art).
- Reflect on contemporary culture and events and evaluate the effects on their spiritual lives.
- Explain the meaning of the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer.
- Prepare and assume different roles in a communal prayer and/or liturgy.
- Discuss how trust in God is the basis for prayers of petition.
- Appreciate the centrality of prayer in a Catholic Christian life, particularly the celebration of the Sunday Eucharistic liturgy.

8th GRADE

- Discuss the longing for God that is placed in the heart of every human being.
- Reflect on Scripture in personal prayer.
- Explain how the practice of the moral and theological virtues is a response to God's grace and strengthens their spiritual life.
- Discuss how the Church nurtures their relationship with Jesus Christ within the Catholic Community.
- Evaluate their practice of personal prayer and describe changes that would strengthen their prayer life.
- Show an understanding of the need for conscious participation in liturgy and other prayer experiences.

TO BE LEARNED BY HEART

7th GRADE

- Pray the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary.

8th GRADE

- Say all prayers to be learned by heart.