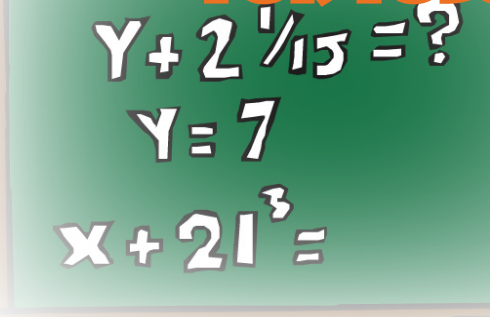


CHALK TALK

FOR TODAY'S CLASSROOM



CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION BULLETIN

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WELCOME BACK TO ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR!

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.
Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Teach them to carry out everything
I have commanded you.”
(Mt. 28:19-20)

In a pastoral address, Most Reverend Henry J. Mansell Archbishop of Hartford Connecticut, wrote these words: “We are called by our baptism to be a faith-filled and hopeful community entrusted by God, through the salvation of Jesus Christ, to live out the Good News in His Church and in His world by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are a Church willing and able to commit ourselves to the apostolic ministry of teaching. We are called to be beacons of great hope for our young people and for their descendents who will continue to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.”

“It is through the teaching ministry of Catholic school education that we form, inform, and transform our young people to become truly productive moral citizens, spiritual leaders, and global thinkers. The Catholic Church recognizes: ‘Education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and the building of community. Community is central to educational ministry, both a necessary condition

and an ardently desired goal. The educational efforts of the Church must therefore be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only to his solitary destiny but also to the destinies of the many communities in which he lives.’ (To Teach As Jesus Did, #13)” (Source: www.archdioceseofhartford.org/writings2/archbmansell_letter_08-01-27.htm)

What an awesome responsibility each of us in Catholic Education has...the formation of the Church of tomorrow. The formation of young people who will be able to address, with Christian insight, the problems they will face in this 21st century. The formation of young people who possess the skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind needed to reach out and be of service to others.

What an awesome challenge before us – “to teach as Jesus did.”

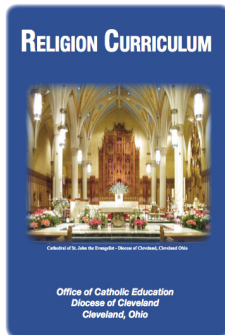


Implementing Our New Elementary Religion Curriculum

Teach them to carry out everything
I have commanded you.”
(Mt. 28: 20)

“It is through the teaching ministry of Catholic school education that we form, inform, and transform our young people to become truly productive moral citizens, spiritual leaders, and global thinkers,” states Archbishop Mansell. Through everything we do in the school, we form, inform, and transform the students we have in our classrooms. We are all catechists. We are all called to “teach as Jesus did.”

After three years of writing and rewriting we now place the revised Religion Curriculum in the hands of our elementary teachers. This curriculum reflects the prayerful work of many individuals – the teachers who spent many hours of their summer vacation preparing the initial draft; Bishop Richard Lennon, Father Michael Lanning and Sister Mary McCormick, O.S.U. who reviewed the curriculum; the USCCB Publishing Office who granted permission to quote the Catechism throughout the text; and the staff of the Office of Catholic Education who reviewed and proof-read the document. Many hands, heads, and hearts worked on the development of our Religion Curriculum. We are grateful to all who assisted in this process.



Now, the work of our teacher-catechists begins. In an effort to guide our teachers in the full implementation of this curriculum and to renew and strengthen their personal faith, the Office of Catholic Education is offering a series of professional development sessions. As a way to provide these sessions to approximately 3500 teachers in our elementary schools, the Office is initiating a new approach to professional development. There will be four “live” sessions and four “on-site” sessions. In this way, every elementary teacher in the diocese will have an opportunity to participate. The presentations given in the live sessions will be recorded and uploaded to our *Schoology* site. This will make it possible for teachers who did not attend the live sessions to view the presentation at the on-site session. It is our hope that through these on-site sessions, teachers

Feast Days in September

September 1	St. Giles	
September 3	St. Gregory the Great	
September 5	Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta	
September 8	Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary	
September 9	St. Peter Claver	
September 12	Most Holy Name of Mary	
September 13	St. John Chrysostom	
September 14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	
September 15	Our Lady of Sorrows	
September 17	St. Robert Bellarmine	
September 18	St. John Cupertino	
September 19	St. Januarius	
September 21	St. Matthew	
September 26	Sts. Cosmos and Damian	
September 27	St. Vincent de Paul	
September 29	Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael	
September 30	St. Jerome	

will share personal reflections about their faith and ideas on how to best implement the curriculum in their classrooms.

The professional development sessions will address the Strands of the curriculum: **Message, Worship, Community, and Service**. Dr. Mary McCormick, O.S.U. will be the presenter for the first strand which is **Message**. Sister is a professor of Systematic Theology at St. Mary Seminary and has experience teaching at both the elementary and secondary levels. The live session addressing Message was held on August 19th, the on-site session will be held in the schools on September 23rd.



The second Strand, **Worship**, focuses on the meaning and importance of worship in the life of a believer. Our presenter, Father Michael Woost who is an Assistant Professor of Liturgical Theology at St. Mary Seminary, will provide our teacher-catechists the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the place of worship in living out their faith and how they might impart that understanding and appreciation to their students. The live session on Worship will be on November 11th and the on-site session will be on January 13th.

We are called to be a community of faith filled disciples of Christ. The curriculum presented in the third Strand



addresses the importance of Church **Community**. To help our teachers gain a fuller understanding and appreciation for Church community, a live professional development session will be held on February 17th and the on-site session on March 16th.

The fourth strand of the curriculum is **Service**. As faith-filled people of God, we are called to be of service to the Church, our community, and the people of the world, especially the poor and disenfranchised.



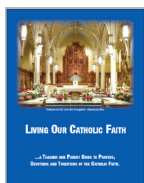
To help all of us gain a better understanding of our need to respond in service to others our presenter is Sister Mary Kathleen Ryan, S.N.D. who serves on the leadership team for *Catholic Schools for Peace and Justice*. This live session will be held on March 30th and the on-site session will be on May 11th.

Message ~ Worship ~ Community ~ Service

The Religion Curriculum for the elementary schools of the diocese consists of several documents. The entire curriculum is presented in book form and electronic form (CD). Laminated teacher guides, which contain all of the content for a specific grade, are available for each grade level.



Additionally, materials have been prepared to assist both teachers and parents in their united effort to teach our Catholic faith to the young people of the diocese.



Living Our Catholic Faith is a booklet containing a compilation of prayers, devotions and traditions of the Catholic faith. The intent of this document is to provide both teachers and parents with a quick resource.

An additional document of the Religion Curriculum is a set of *Skill Summary Sheets*. Consisting of one for each grade, these sheets present all of the skills that are to be taught at a specific grade. In this way, parents will know what is being taught and can be encouraged to be partners in the faith formation of their children.

As we move forward with our study of and reflection on the Religion Curriculum and our responsibility to fully implement it in our schools, it seems appropriate to reflect on the following words from the *National Directory for Catechesis*:

“By God’s grace, some people are called to proclaim the Gospel and to receive an apostolic mission as catechists. These catechists are the instruments of God’s own methodology. Catechists do not merely transmit human knowledge; they transmit knowledge of the faith and, respecting ‘the absolute originality of faith’ they do so according to ‘a pedagogy of faith’ that is patterned after God’s own methodology. While catechists rightly employ a variety of methods and techniques in the transmission of the knowledge of faith, God’s own methodology – the Father’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit – always remain the model for all human methodologies. ...Whatever method is used, all catechesis occurs within the life of a worshipping community. Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, this community gives praise and thanks to God.” (Page 107)



High School Theology Curriculum

Over the past two years, work has been ongoing in the development of a High School Theology Curriculum. This curriculum is to be based on the document: ***Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*** published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2008.

High school theology teachers have been assisting the diocesan office with this work. While considerable progress has been made, much work remains to be done on the curriculum. It is hoped that a document will be ready for distribution to our high schools before Christmas.

In the meantime, a series of professional development sessions are being offered the high school theology teachers on the *elective courses* identified in the **Framework**. The schedule of these sessions can be found on the diocesan registration site at www.oce-ocs.org/oce/register. Teachers are encouraged to register early for these sessions.

Special Days in September

September 2	Nat'l Blueberry Popsicle Day	
September 5	Nat'l Cheese Pizza Day	
	Labor Day	
September 6	Read a Book Day	
September 8	International Literacy Day	
September 9	Teddy Bear Day	
September 11	Patriot Day	
September 13	Positive Thinking Day	
September 15	Make a Hat Day	
September 17	Constitution Day	
	Yom Kippur begins at Sundown	
September 18	Nat'l Respect Day	
September 20	Nat'l Student Day	
September 22	First Day of Autumn	
September 24	Nat'l Punctuation Day	
September 25	Nat'l Comic Book Day	
September 26	Johnny Appleseed's Birthday	
September 27	Crush a Can Day	
September 28	Rosh Hashanah begins at Sundown	
September 30	Safety Pin Invented (1849)	

Did You Know?

100 Years Ago...

Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, who discovered the magnetic north pole, reached the South Pole.

First airmail is carried from London to Berkshire.

Republic of China founded.

Chevrolet Motor Company founded.

First Hollywood studios built.

Word "Vitamin" used to describe chemicals necessary to diets.

They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

Theodore Roosevelt

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Elementary

September 23	On-Site Religion Curriculum Session 8:00am - 3:00pm
October 21	PreSchool Professional Development 8:30am - 2:30pm St. Basil the Great Campus
October 25	Math/Technology Integration 4:00 - 6:30pm
October 28	Physical Education Conference 8:00am - 3:30pm St. Michael's Woodside

High School

October 24	Theology Session: Church History I 8:30am - 2:30pm St. Michael's Woodside
November 14	Theology Session: Church History II 8:30am - 2:30pm St. Michael's Woodside

All Grade Levels (K-12)

September 20	Digital Citizenship Academy 4:00 - 6:30pm St. Paschal Baylon
October 12	Digital Citizenship Academy 4:00 - 6:30pm St. Adalbert, Berea
October 20	New Web Tools 4:00 - 6:30pm

Register online at www.occ-ocs.org/occ/register.

Storybird ~ Collaborative Storytelling



Looking for a new way to have your students tell about their summer vacation, or birthday party, and just write creatively? Why not have them create their story using the free Internet site www.storybird.com. This is a great site for any age level.

Storybird allows students to work with their parents and friends in creating art-inspired stories to share and save. Users choose from art hosted on the site and build a story around the images that can then be shared with family and friends. Storybird encourages creativity and is a web tool that supports working collaboratively.

Strategy of the Month

Tapping Into Prior Knowledge

All teachers, whether new to the profession or a veteran of many years, know how important prior knowledge is in the learning process. Learning progresses primarily from prior knowledge, and only secondarily from the materials we present to students. So, what does that mean for us as our students return from summer vacation? Often times, there is a rather significant learning curve that we must hurdle. How much learning and how many skills have our students “lost” over the summer break? Where do we begin?

In our eagerness to teach new concepts or skills, we often forget to take the time to slow down, ask the students what they already know about the concept, and make important connections to the new material. New knowledge is constructed from old. It is essential that we make connections between the new that is being presented with student’s prior knowledge.

Launching the learning in your classroom from the prior knowledge of your students is sound teaching. First, find out what they know before moving forward with



the instruction. Not only will this enhance the teaching process, but it will also promote student engagement in the learning process.

Activities that will activate prior knowledge include:

- *Image Brainstorm.* Project an image on the smartboard and ask students to tell you everything they can about the picture. Choose images that make sense to them and also allow you to connect to the new concepts students will be learning.
- *K-W-L Chart.* Working in groups, students will indicate what they think they already know about the topic (K) and what they would like to learn about the topic (W). After teaching the lesson, students can go back to the chart to indicate what they have learned (L) and determine if their questions were answered
- *ABC Brainstorming.* Using every letter of the alphabet, students brainstorm a word or phrase related to the topic to be studied that starts with each letter.

Our students are not “empty vessels waiting to be filled” with the knowledge we possess. We need to ignite their prior learning in order to guide and shape their new learning.



Need Assistance? Have Questions or Concerns?

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