

# *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 3**

### **First Trimester**

#### **I. THE TRINITY**

- A. CENTRAL MYSTERY OF OUR FAITH
- B. COMMUNITY OF LOVE CONSISTING OF GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT
- C. GOD THE FATHER -  
THE FIRST PERSON OF THE BLESSED TRINITY  
Gn. 1:1-13, Ex. 3:1-20, Ps 8:1-9, 150:1-6  
Jn 1:17-18, 1Jn. 4:7-13
  - 1. Creator of all
    - a. Creates freely out of nothing and out of love
    - b. Created the world to show forth and communicate his glory
  - 2. Father of us all
  - 3. God reveals himself to us
  - 4. Some characteristics of God
    - a. Holy
    - b. Almighty
    - c. All-knowing
    - d. All-loving
    - e. Everlasting
- D. GOD THE SON – JESUS  
THE SECOND PERSON OF THE BLESSED TRINITY  
Is 9:1-7, Lk. 1:26-38                      Lk. 1:-45, 2:1-20  
Mt. 3:13-17, 6:7-15                      Jn. 1:7-18
  - 1. Savior
    - a. Jesus dies to save us
    - b. Jesus opened heaven to us
  - 2. Names given to Jesus
    - a. Christ, Messiah                      - Anointed One
    - b. Savior                                      - One who saves



- 5) We are incorporated into the Church.
- 6) We are made sharers in the Church's mission.

b. Symbols (1234-45)

- 1) Water
- 2) Oils (of Catechumen and Chrism)
- 3) Candles (Paschal and Baptismal)
- 4) Baptismal garment
- 5) Words and actions

c. Ordinary Minister

- 1) The priest or deacon
- 2) In case of emergency, any person with the proper intention

d. Responsibilities of the Baptized

- 1) To love God and others
- 2) To live up to our baptismal promises

2. Confirmation (1285)

“For by the sacrament of Confirmation, (the baptized) are more perfectly Bound to the church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged To spread and defend the faith by word and deed.”

a. Effect of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit (1302)

b. Indelible *spiritual mark* (character); (1304-05)  
like Baptism this sacrament is received only once.

c. Symbols (1300)

- 1) Laying on of hands
- 2) Anointing with Chrism
- 3) Words used

*Bishop:* N., Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Response:* Amen

*Bishop:* Peace be with you.

*Response:* And also with you.

- e. Ordinary Minister – the bishop
- f. How the sacrament is celebrated – usually during the celebration of Mass
  - 1) Presentation of the candidates
  - 2) Renewal of Baptismal Promises
  - 3) Imposition of hands
  - 4) Anointing with chrism

3. Holy Eucharist (1113,1210-11, 1322-27, 1343, 1395)

“The Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation.” (1322)

“The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life.” (1324)

The Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine.

- a. Names (1328-32)

- 1) Holy Eucharist
- 2) Holy Communion (1331)
- 3) Blessed Sacrament (1330)
- 4) Body and Blood of Christ
- 5) Thanksgiving (1328)

- b. Stories of the Last Supper – The First Eucharist

Mt. 26:25-29, Mk. 14:22-25, Lk. 22:14-20  
Jn. 6:32-58, 13:1-16, 1 Cor. 10:16-18, 11:23

- c. Signs - bread and wine
- d. Minister - priest
- e. Celebrating the Sacrament
  - 1) Mass - a share in Jesus' Last Supper
  - 2) Consecration of the Mass (1353)

The Holy Spirit, through the action of the priest, changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ

- f. Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (1379-80)
  - 1) Blessed Sacrament not consumed at Mass is reserved in the tabernacle (1378, 1418)
    - (a) Sanctuary Lamp
    - (b) Genuflection
  - 2) Adoration
    - (a) Monstrance
    - (b) Incense
  - 3) Benediction – highlights presence of Christ in the Eucharist
    - (a) Readings from the Word of God
    - (b) Hymns
    - (c) Prayers
    - (d) Time for silent adoration
    - (e) Blessing of the people with the sacred host

### **III MARY**

#### **A TITLES OF MARY**

- 1. Mother of God Lk. 1:26-38, 46-56

“Mary is truly ‘Mother of God’ since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made flesh, Who is God himself.”

- 2. Our Mother

3. Mary as model for all believers
4. Mother of the Church
5. The Immaculate Conception – Patroness of the United States and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

6. Our Lady of Guadalupe – Patroness of the Americas

**B DAYS IN HONOR OF OUR LADY**

- |           |    |                                 |
|-----------|----|---------------------------------|
| September | 8  | Feast of the Birth of Mary      |
| September | 15 | Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows |

**C. PRAYERS TO OUR LADY- THE ROSARY**

1. *The Joyful Mysteries*
2. *The Sorrowful Mysteries*
3. *The Glorious Mysteries*
4. *The Luminous Mysteries*

**IV SAINTS, FEASTS, AND SPECIAL PEOPLE**

- |           |    |  |
|-----------|----|--|
| September | 9  | Memorial of St. Peter Claver   |
| October   | 1  | Memorial of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor (St. Therese, the Little Flower) |
| October   | 2  | Memorial of the guardian Angels  |
| October   | 4  | Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi  |
| October   | 7  | Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary   |
| November  | 1  | Solemnity of All Saints  |
| November  | 2  | All Souls Day  |
| November  | 3  | St. Martin de Porres, Religious  |
| November  | 19 | Our Lady of Divine Providence  |
| November  | 21 | Memorial of the Presentation of Mary   |
| November  | 30 | Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle   |

## **V PRAYER**

### **A. TRADITIONAL**

1. Sign of the Cross
2. Our Father
3. Hail Mary
4. Doxology (Glory Be...)
5. Prayers of the Mass
6. Act of Contrition
7. Grace before and after Meals (2698)
8. The Rosary
9. Hail Holy Queen
10. Apostles Creed (190)

## **VI LITURGICAL YEAR**

- A. SUNDAY – the Lord’s day is the day on which we celebrate Jesus Resurrection. It is the heart of the Church’s life.
- B. ORDINARY TIME: liturgical color is green: hope, growth, life
- C. ADVENT
  1. Liturgical color is purple: preparation, Sorrow for sin, repentance.
  2. Period of four weeks of preparation for Christmas
  3. Advent symbols
    - a. Jesse Tree – recalls how people since Adam and Eve have awaited Jesus’ birth
    - b. Advent wreath

## **VII SACRAMENTALS**

- A. BLESSEED ASHES
- B. BLESSED PALM
- C. BLESSED MEDALS
- D. STATUES/ICONS

## *Second Trimester*

### I. SACRAMENTS

#### A. SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

Mt. 22:34-49, Lk. 7:44-50  
Lk. 23:33-34, Jn. 15:12,  
Acts 2:37-41

1. Penance and Reconciliation (1423-24,1486)
  - a. Effects
    - 1) Forgiveness of sins
    - 2) Reconciliation with God and the Church
  - b. Symbols
    - 1) Imposition of hands
    - 2) Words of Absolution
  - c. Minister – priest
  
2. Anointing of the Sick Jas 5:14-15, (1509)
  - a. Effect
    - 1) Spiritual and sometimes physical healing
    - 2) Forgiveness of sins
  - b. Symbols
    - 1) Imposition of hands
    - 2) Anointing with the oil of the Sick  
(Oil of the Infirm)
  - c. Minister – priest
  - d. How the sacrament is celebrated
    - 1) Prayer over the sick
    - 2) Imposition of hands
    - 3) Anointing with oil

## B. THE SACRAMENTS AT THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

1. Holy Orders (1536, 1554, 1593)
  - a. Effects
    - 1) In this sacrament a man is ordained a deacon, priest, or bishop.
    - 3) This sacrament like Baptism and Confirmation, confers an indelible *spiritual character* (mark) and can be received only once.
    - 4) The mission entrusted by Jesus Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time.
    - 5) It is a sacrament of service to God's people.
  - b. How the sacrament is celebrated
    - 1) Imposition of hands
    - 2) Anointing of palms of the hands with chrism
    - 3) Prayer of consecration
    - 4) Giving of chalice and paten
  - c. Minister - the bishop
  - d. Celebrated during the Eucharistic Liturgy

2. Matrimony (1601)
  - a. Effect
    - 1) A man and woman promise each other before God and the Church to love and honor each other for the rest of their lives.
    - 2) In this sacrament God gives the man and woman the grace to make lifelong promises. (1603)
    - 3) This promise has been raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of the sacrament.

- b. Symbol - the covenant: the exchange of promises between the man and woman reflect the covenant between Jesus and the Church.
- c. Minister - the baptized man and woman
- d. Witnesses
  - 1) The priest
  - 2) The assembly of believers – only two witnesses necessary
- e. Usually celebrated during the Eucharistic Liturgy

## **II LITURGICAL YEAR**

### **A. CHRISTMAS**

- 1. Liturgical Color is white:  
Joy, glory, innocence

### **B. LENT**

(1095)

- 1. Time of Preparation for Easter
- 2. From Ash Wednesday to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
- 3. Liturgical color is purple for penance

## **III SAINTS, FEASTS, AND SPECIAL PEOPLE**

December	6	St. Nicholas, Bishop
December	8	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
December	9	Blessed Juan Diego
December	12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
January	1	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
January	4	Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
January	5	Feast of St. John Neumann, Bishop
January	6	Solemnity of the Epiphany ( or the Sunday between January 5 and January 9)

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

January	31	Memorial of St. John Bosco, Priest
February	2	Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord
February	11	Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

**IV PRAYER**

**A. TRADITIONAL**

Morning Offering (2698)

**B. SPONTANEOUS (2643-44)**

1. Prayer of petition (2629,2633,2647)
2. Prayer of thanks (2637-38)
3. Prayer asking for forgiveness (2631)
4. Prayer of praise (2639-49)

**C. REVIEW PRAYERS OF THE MASS**

**D. STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

**VI SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**A. AWARENESS OF THE NEEDS OF OTHERS**

1. Family
2. Parish
3. Community

## *Third Trimester*

- I      GOD’S LAW** (2055)
- A.    THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (2056-60)
1.    Present the Ten Commandments as given by God to Moses as a covenant with his people.
  2.    Scripture story of God and Moses Ex. 19: 16-25; 20:1-21
  3.    First three commandments express our fundamental duties to God.  
(2134, 2161, 2165-66, 2190-92)
  4.    Other commandments express our fundamental duties to our neighbor.  
(2248, 2319, 2393, 2454, 2508, 2531, 2553)
- B      THE GREAT COMMANDMENT OF LOVE (2055)
1.    Given by Jesus Mt. 22:33-40
  2.    The Ten Commandments can be interpreted in light of the great commandment of love.
- II     CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**
- A.    BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH
1.    Life of Jesus
  2.    Birthday of the Church – Pentecost Acts. 2:1-24; 37-41
  3.    Early Church community Acts 2: 42-47
- B.    COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH TODAY
1.    Church as Family
  2.    Church as Parish
  3.    Church as Diocese
  4.    The Universal Church
  5.    The Communion of Saints (946-53)

- C. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH (811)
1. The Church is **ONE**. (866)
  2. The Church is **HOLY**. (867)
  3. The Church is **CATHOLIC**. (868)
  4. The Church is **APOSTOLIC**. (869)
- D. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
1. Sacraments of Initiation: (1212)  
*Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist*
  2. As baptized disciples of Jesus we are of service to the Church by Mt. 28: 19-20
    - a. Living the Good News
    - b. Spreading the Good News
    - c. Celebrating the Good News

### III LITURGICAL YEAR

- A. HOLY WEEK
1. Palm Sunday Jn. 12: 12-19
  2. Triduum
    - a. Holy Thursday: Last Supper Mt. 26:26-35  
Mk. 14: 22-31  
Lk. 22:14-23
    - b. Good Friday: Veneration of the Cross  
Liturgical color is red for the blood  
of Jesus shed for us Mt 27, Mk. 15, Lk 23
    - c. Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil
- B. EASTER SEASON (1168-69)
1. Easter Sunday: liturgical color is white for glory, joy,  
innocence Mt 28:1-15, Mk 16:1-8

- Lk 24: 1-12, Jn 20: 1-10
2. Ascension Thursday: liturgical color is white  
Mt 28:16-20, Mk 16:19-20  
 Lk 24:50-53, Acts 1:6-12
3. Pentecost: liturgical color is red for the Holy Spirit  
Acts 2:1-4

**C. OTHER CELEBRATIONS**

1. Trinity Sunday – Sunday after Pentecost
2. Corpus Christi – Sunday after Trinity Sunday

**D. ORDINARY TIME:** liturgical color is green for hope, growth, life

**IV. SAINTS, FEASTS, AND SPECIAL PEOPLE**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| March 3     | Memorial of St. Katharine Drexel   |
| March 17    | Memorial of St. Patrick  |
| March 19    | Solemnity of St. Joseph  |
| March 25    | Solemnity of the Annunciation  |
| April 25    | Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist  |
| April 29    | Memorial of St. Catherine of Siena   |
| May 1       | St. Joseph the Worker  |
| May or June | Immaculate Heart of Mary<br>(Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost) |
| June 29     | Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles                                       |
| July 3      | Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle   |

**HOLIDAYS OF OBLIGATION** (2043, 2177, 2180)

- |                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| January 1            | Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God |
| 40 Days after Easter | Ascension Thursday                   |

November 1		Solemnity of All Saints
December 8		Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
December	25	Solemnity of Christmas
August	15	Solemnity of the Assumption

**LITURGICAL COLORS**

1. Green Ordinary Time for hope
2. Red Pentecost, feasts of martyrs, Palm Sunday, Good Friday
3. Purple Lent and Advent for penitence
4. White (gold) Christmas and Easter for joy

**V. SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**A SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

1. Participate in Lenten Programs
2. Practice acts of kindness and forgiveness towards family members.

# *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
2. Ascension Thursday
3. Assumption, August 15
4. All Saints, November 1
5. Immaculate Conception, December 8
6. Christmas, December 25

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**September 8**                      *Feast of the Birth of Mary*

**September 9**                      *Memorial of St. Peter Claver, Priest*

St. Peter Claver was born in Spain in 1580. He entered the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1602. He heard and followed the call to the missions. St. Peter Claver worked in Columbia among the black slaves until his death on September 8, 1654. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1248)

**September 15**                      **Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows**

**October 1**                      *Memorial of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor*

Therese was born in Normandy, France in 1873. She entered a Carmelite monastery at a young age. She lived a life of humility, simplicity, and trust in God. St. Therese taught virtue by her word and example. She died of tuberculosis at age 24 and was canonized in 1915. St. Therese is the patron of the missions. She is known as the "Little Flower."

**October 2**                      *Memorial of the Guardian Angels*                      Ex. 23:20-21

**October 4**                      *Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi*

**October 7**                      *Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary*

**November 1**                      *Solemnity of All Saints*

**November 2**                      *All Souls Day*

**November 3**                      *St. Martin de Porres, Religious*

St. Martin de Porres was born at Lima in Peru of a Spanish father and a Negro mother in 1579. He helped the poor, having studied medicine as a boy, and was devoted to the holy Eucharist. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1310)

**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 12<sup>th</sup> century, then spread to Spain and then to Puerto Rico.

**November 21**                      *Memorial of the Presentation of Mary*

This day, in the Latin Church, recalls the tradition according to which Mary as a small child was presented to the Lord by her parents in the Temple. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1322)

**November 30**                      *Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle*

Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist before he became a follower of Jesus, to whom he brought his brother Peter. After Pentecost he preached the Gospel in many lands and was put to death by crucifixion at Achaia. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1325)

**December 6**                      *St. Nicholas, Bishop*

**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 9**                      *Blessed Juan Diego*

Through Blessed Juan Diego, God made known the love of Our Lady of Guadalupe to his people. Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego on December 9, 1531 and asked that a chapel be built at Tepeyac near Mexico City. The Blessed Mother arranged roses in Blessed Juan Diego's cloak as a "sign" to the bishop. She left him with a picture of herself imprinted upon his cloak for all to see even until today.

**December 12**                      *Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe*

Devotion to Mary under the title of "Our Lady of Guadalupe" has continually increased. Today she is the Patroness of the Americas.

**December 25**                      *Solemnity of Christmas*

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

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

**January 1**                      *Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God*

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

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

Born in Bohemia in 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, increasing the number of parochial schools in Philadelphia, instituting the Forty Hours devotion, and constructing a cathedral. He died in 1860 and was canonized by Pope Paul VI in June 1977.

***Solemnity of the Epiphany***  
**(or the Sunday between January 5 and January 8)**

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

**January 31**                      ***Memorial of St. John Bosco, Priest***

John was born in Italy in 1815. He became a priest and dedicated himself to the education of the young. His theory of education involved a balance of work, study, and play.

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

**February 11**                      ***Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes***

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

Saint Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia on November 26, 1858. Her mother died when she was a baby. Her step-mother was a wonderful woman. Katharine's family was very wealthy, but she was taught to be especially concerned about the poor. When Katharine grew up, she was very generous with her time and money. She turned her energies and her fortune to the poor and forgotten. She worked with the African-American and Native-American people. In 1891, she began the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She became known as Mother Katharine. The sisters center their life around Jesus in the Eucharist. The community of sisters started schools, convents, and missionary churches. In 1925, they established Xavier University in New Orleans. Mother Katharine Drexel 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. (*Saints for Young Readers for Every Day*, Volume I)

**March 17**                              ***Memorial of St. Patrick, Bishop***  
**March 19**                              ***Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary***

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

**April**        **25**                    *Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist*

Mark was a cousin to St. Barnabas, but was not himself one of the twelve Apostles. We do not know if he knew Jesus personally. We do know that he accompanied St. Paul on his first missionary journey and that he was a disciple of St. Peter. He is considered to be the author of the oldest and shortest of the four gospels, probably written thirty to forty years after the crucifixion of Our Lord.

**April**        **29**                    *Memorial of St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor*

Catherine was born in Siena in 1347. She sought the way of perfection and entered the Third Order of St. Dominic at age 18. She established peace and concord between war-torn cities, fought for the rights and freedom of the Pope, and promoted renewal of religious life. She composed words of doctrine and spiritual inspiration. In 1970, Pope Paul VI named her a doctor of the Church.

**May**        **1**                    *St. Joseph the Worker*

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

**May**                                    **(Variable)**    *The Immaculate Heart of Mary*  
**(Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost)**

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

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

St. Thomas is remembered for his doubt concerning Christ's resurrection from the dead. Nothing certain is known of his life except for this evidence in the gospels. He is said to have subsequently preached the Gospel to the people of India. (Christian Prayer, 1976, p. 1186)

**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)

# 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:**

4. Call the children to prayer, invite them to be still.
5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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!
8. 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?
9. Older children may be more comfortable seated in a circle facing away from the center.
10. 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*.