

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MILESTONES G1-G10
Guide for All Catechists & Parents

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“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And, behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.

(Matthew 28: 19-20)

Religious Education Goals in this parish are to:

1. Complete a child’s initiation into the Catholic Church
2. Proclaim Christ’s message of Salvation through the Word of God
3. Connect one’s faith into daily action and prayer
4. Build a strong Catholic community
5. Motivate and lead others in mission and action to serve as Jesus did
6. Emphasize the importance of family worship
7. Establish a personal relationship with Jesus
8. Recognize active participation at Mass as the source and summit of our faith
9. Give thanks through the Eucharist as members of the Body of Christ
10. Better understand the role of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
11. Nurture and form consciences in light of Revealed Truth

Religious Education Milestones

The following milestones are used to provide catechists and parents a guideline by which to follow their child's progress in attaining the fundamentals of our Catholic faith.

By the time the child has completed.....

- 1st Grade, (**1st Year of Two-Year Program**) student should be familiar with:
 - How to (correctly) make the Sign of the Cross
 - Hail Mary
 - Our Father

- 2nd Grade, (**2nd Year of Two-Year Program**) student is **not allowed to miss more than three classes**, and student should know the above, plus:
 - The Glory Be
 - Prayer before meals
 - How to say the Act of Contrition How to correctly receive Reconciliation (Confession and Penance)
 - How to correctly receive Communion
 - The major parts of the Mass in some grade level detail

- 3rd Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - The Ten Commandments
 - The Apostles Creed
 - The Stations of the Cross

- 4th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - The Seven Sacraments
 - Be able to explain all parts of the Mass
 - How to look up passages in the Bible
 - Introduction to the Rosary

- 5th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - Act of Contrition
 - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 - Morning Offering
 - Prayer to the Holy Spirit
 - Prayer After Meals

- 6th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed)
 - Apostle's Creed
 - The Magnificat
 - Deeper Understanding of Rosary and How to Say Rosary

- 7th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
 - Praying with the Bible
 - Different Forms of Prayer

- 8th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - Conversations with God
 - Daily Examination of Conscience
 - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

- 9th and 10th Grade, student should know the above, plus:
 - Knowledge of Scripture and its presence in the Liturgy
 - Communication with Jesus through writing, adoration, and meditation
 - The lives of saints
 - Apostolic Service
 - Corporal Works of Mercy
 - Gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - Power of prayer and Rosary
 - Sacrament of Confirmation – completing initiation into Church
 - Fulfilling the Baptismal promise

Grade One – Year One in our Two-year Sacramental Formation Program
(This is a PRE-REQUISITE for the Second Year of Sacramental Preparation)

We share in the belief of the Catholic Church that parents are the primary educators of their children in matters of faith and morals. By what they say and do, parents provide a faith model for their children. They are the most effective teachers of prayer to their children.

To be most effective, our Grade One Religious Education teachers must work with parents as a team to ensure that what is taught at church is reinforced at home. Communication by email is a primary source of information between Church and home.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of families worshipping together on a weekly basis. If that component is missing in a child's religious education, it will have a negative impact on their faith formation. What students learn in Grade One about attendance at Mass becomes the foundation of their faith. When children observe an ongoing, working relationship between church and home, faith becomes a way of life. Instead of being regarded as an obligation, attending Mass becomes a cherished event to look forward to every week or as often as you can.

When students learn to participate in small Christian faith communities as part of their religious education, they are more likely to continue practicing their faith even after they receive their sacraments.

Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade One* include:

- God in all creation
- The Holy Family
- Jesus and His teachings
- What is Prayer?
- The Sign of the Cross
- Our Father and Hail Mary
- Bible stories: Children learn as a group to listen to stories from the Old and New Testament
- St. Maria Goretti lesson: heroic youngster who loved her parents and lived a humble life
- All Saints Day – recognize what it is
- Thanksgiving Lesson: Students join together as a community to focus on thanking God for all the good things in their lives
- Christmas Pageant: students share in the wonder of Christmas as a religious holiday, using the Gospel of Luke

Grade Two – Year Two in our Two-Year Sacramental Formation Program
(Student must have completed the first year of formation in Grade One.)

Once children reach the age of reason, they are better able to know the difference between right and wrong. When children talk about what is right and wrong, they often look for forgiveness from others. They learn about God's unconditional love for His children and about the importance of receiving God's forgiveness when we ask for it. To help students better understand, God's love is compared to a parent's love for a child. Lessons about God's love, sacrifice, and forgiveness prepare students for the sacrament of Reconciliation, when they will be confessing their sins and doing penance.

Regular attendance at Mass is a child's first introduction to their faith. Students should attend weekly. By learning prayers said during Mass, children are using those words to communicate with God. They also become a witness to the community of believers gathered to worship. Observing parishioners as they receive the Body and Blood of Christ, young children become eager to be included in the sacrament. This best prepares them. *Students may not miss more than three scheduled classes.*

Those students receiving the Eucharist for the first time are introduced to the healing powers, love, and joy found by those who receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Baptism is the first Sacrament of Initiation into the Church. Eucharist is the second.

Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Two* include:

- Forgiveness
- God's unconditional love
- Act of Contrition
- The Mass
- What is a sacrament?
- Baptism
- Reconciliation (Confession and Penance)
- Eucharist and receiving Holy Communion
- St. Maria Goretti
- Our Father
- Hail Mary

Grade Three

Learning primarily from their senses, specific concepts in *Grade Three* include:

- The miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus, Assumption of Mary
- Beliefs contained in the Apostles Creed
- Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic
- Pentecost and the Holy Spirit
- The Ten Commandments
- Thanksgiving Lesson: students thank God as a community
- Stations of the Cross: children learn about the Stations, make displays in the Church, and do the readings at the Stations.

Grades Four, Five, and Six

Accustomed to classroom settings, children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 are capable of sitting attentively and listening to a story. At an appropriate age to introduce devotion to the Blessed Mother, children receive introduction to the Rosary. Students at this age have a heightened sense of right and wrong and will benefit from learning about saints.

Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Four* include:

- The Beatitudes
- Parables
- Order of the Mass, Seasons of Faith, Free Will
- The Seven Sacraments
- All Saints Lesson: St. Maria Goretti's piety and forgiveness
- Thanksgiving Lesson: students thank God as a community

Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Five* include:

- Sacraments – Community of Jesus established through Church
- Seasons of Faith
- God as Creator and Father and as Son of God and Son of Mary
- Gifts of the Holy Spirit -- Transubstantiation
- Vocations – Called to lived like Jesus
- All Saints Lesson: each student reads/researches a saint (St. Maria Goretti)
- Students and teacher will pray the Rosary
- Meeting Jesus in the Eucharist, Reconciliation, Penance

Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Six* include:

- Sacraments
- Old Testament and the Covenant
- Jesus' teachings
- The Ten Commandments
- Social Justice
- The Profession of Faith
- Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- Examination of the Apostles' Creed
- Moral Decisions/Choices
- Saints (St. Maria Goretti)
- Holy Trinity
- Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, and Love)
- Seasons of Faith

Grade Seven

Adolescents want to be treated like adults and welcome the chance to talk about world issues, to ask questions, and express opinions. Emotional and physical changes are an incentive for teaching them about respect for others and God's plan for them.

Specific concepts to be covered in ***Grade Seven*** include:

- The life of Jesus as described in the Gospels
- John, Mark, Matthew, Luke, and Paul
- Scripture – Praying with the Bible
- Different forms of prayer – Adoration, Petition, Thanksgiving, Atonement
- Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- Life in Jesus/Living life as a Christian, co-worker with God
- Living in Holiness, Worship
- Jesus forgiveness and healing, role as Son of God
- Death and Resurrection, Salvation
- Sacraments
- The Trinity
- Christian morality and chastity – teaching The Truth, Christian choices
- ***“Created for Love”/Chastity*** curriculum –
- Catholic Social Justice – shelters and soup kitchens
- St. Maria Goretti

Grade Eight (Prerequisite to Two-Year Confirmation Program)

Students continue to develop both emotionally and physically. Relationships define them. During this transition period from child to adult, students are establishing their identity and place in the world. As abstract reasoning develops, their relationships with God are on a more spiritual level. As students learn about Jesus and His friends, they develop better understanding about Church history. Catholic message is taught regarding relationships with peers and dating situations.

Specific concepts to be covered in ***Grade Eight*** include:

- God's Revelation – Holy Spirit as our guide – The Good News
- Life and hope in Jesus – Seeing Him as God and Man
- Church History/Renewal: Then and Now
- Jesus Presence – Grace of God – Getting to Know Him
- Catholic Identity: The Way, The Truth, The Life
- Honoring Life (abortion, euthanasia)
- Honoring relationships – conversations with God, daily examen, virtues
- Catholic Social Justice
- Questions and answers about faith
- Chastity
- St. Maria Goretti – meaning to Catholics – chastity, forgiveness, humility

Grades 9 and 10

Please see the online Confirmation Handbook for a more in depth description of the program and requirements. Below is basic information.

Preparation for Confirmation is a ***Two-Year Program***, beginning in Grade 9 and concluding with the conferring of the Sacrament in Grade 10. Grade 9 and 10 students learn together.

Students in Grade 9 and 10 must perform 10 hours of Apostolic Service per year for a total of 20 service hours, all of which must be completed by December 31st of the current year. Catholic School students in Grade 9 are not required to attend classes at St. Maria Goretti Parish. Activities not included in the published Apostolic Service Opportunities List must be approved by the Religious Education Director prior to the student participating in the activity. Service hours earned by students for their public school requirement **may not** be used toward Confirmation service.

Class attendance is mandatory. Students must make up **any class** that is missed by attending an event, retreat, or researching an assigned topic and writing a paper for submission to the Confirmation Coordinator. In addition, in order to demonstrate acceptance as a candidate for Confirmation, **Grade 10 students** must attend the following **mandatory** events. See the Confirmation Handbook for mandatory events and dates.

Specific concepts to be covered in **Grade 9 and 10** include:

- Theology of the Body
- Adoration and Guided Meditation
- Old Testament and New Testament
- Triduum – three holiest days of the year
- Rosary – power of the prayer to Mary
- Saints – picking a Confirmation name – do the research on your saint
- Initiation into the Catholic Church
- Sacraments
- Personal relationship with God
- Understanding of the Holy Spirit
- CONFIRMATION is not the END. It is meant to bring together the entire person – physically, emotionally, spiritually – as each candidate completes their initiation process into the Catholic faith. It is the beginning of the young person’s role as defender of their faith.