



Forming Disciples for the New Evangelization Parents' Guide to K- Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guide

The witness of Christian life given by parents in the family comes to children with tenderness and parental respect. . . . It is deepened all the more when parents comment on the more methodical catechesis which their children later receive in the Christian community and help them to appropriate it. (GDC, #226 and CT, #68)

What exactly is this guide *Forming Disciples for the New Evangelization*?

- A document that clearly states what participants in parish and Catholic elementary school religious education programs should be able to *know, understand and do at each grade level*

What is the aim of this guide?

- The primary aim of this guide is to support integrated planning and preparations across all sectors of the church, including parishes, schools and families. This will be done as a part of a diocesan-wide effort to strengthen the teaching of the faith for adults, youth and children. It is directed toward the need to prepare the whole local church (not just children) to overcome the current epidemic of ignorance and doubt about the faith.
- These guidelines focus on the need for mutual collaboration, communication and consultation. They strive to clarify the rolls, responsibilities and mutual accountabilities needed by pastors, catechetical leaders and all who assist in efforts to put adults, youth and children into communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ through life-long catechesis in and through the Catholic Church. These guidelines are focused to help all of parishes and schools as they both revise and plan their future catechetical efforts. Although this first phase of the guide focuses on the formation of children, these standards will also provide a framework for future efforts in the faith formation of youth and adults.

How is it organized? Around the ***Six Key Elements*** of a lived Catholic Faith while always remembering that the context for catechesis is *evangelization*. The six key elements of a Catholic faith lives are: Knowledge of the faith; Liturgical and Sacraments; Morality; Prayer; Education for Living in the Christian Community; Evangelization and Apostolic Life. These are also known as the six tasks of Catechesis.

For Each Element

- There are standards or broad headings. All these standards should be covered in every program for adults, youth and children.

For Each Standard

- Each standard in turn has age appropriate indicators or knowledge, skills or behavior.
- These indicators should drive instruction and guide or focus use of any text or resources.

How are the indicators formatted?

- **Core items that must be covered in all parish and school programs are in bold print.**
- *Enrichment items that are optional and can be covered if there is time are in italics.*

What is meant by words being underlined?

- **Underlining** means this is a vocabulary word to know. These words and their definitions will be available on the Archdiocesan Website on the curriculum page in a Glossary. When a simpler age appropriate definition is needed it is within the indicator itself.

Full Texts of the prayers and practices for Catholics to teach your child are found in the online glossary and also in a downloadable document online: Appendix 2 **KEY PRACTICES AND PRAYERS FOR CATHOLICS.**

CHILD PROTECTION: SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

Archdiocesan policy requires that a session on Safe Environment is offered to all children in our parish and school programs at the start of each program year. The parish programs and many school programs used the *Virtus: Teaching Touching Safety Program*. More information, including a brief summary parent brochure explaining the *Virtus* program can be found on the Archdiocesan website and should be shared by parish catechetical leaders and principals with families at the beginning of each year.



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Key Element I: Knowledge of the Faith

– What We Believe

“Sacred Scripture has a preeminent position in catechesis because Sacred Scripture “presents God’s own Word in unalterable form” and “makes the voice of the Holy Spirit resound again and again in the words of the prophets and apostles.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church is intended to complement Sacred Scripture. Together with Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture constitutes the supreme rule of faith.” (NDC no. 24)

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of the ***Knowledge of the Faith*** in your home: Children are made by God to love and receive love. This is the first order of catechesis, an education in love. Parents also stimulate awareness, awe, and joy for life in the preschool child through nurturing loving relationships and experiencing life's precious moments together. Noticing the beauty of God's creation in nature and exposing children to religious symbols can be particularly illuminating.

Standard 1 **CREED:** Understand, believe and proclaim the Triune and redeeming God as revealed in creation and human experience, in Apostolic Tradition and Sacred Scripture, and as entrusted to the teaching office of the Church.

- **Identify myself and my family as belonging to God’s family.**
- **State that God’s Holy Spirit lives in me.**
- **State that God made me to know, love and serve him and to be happy with him always.**
- **State that Jesus is the Son of God and Son of Mary.**
- *Identify angels as God’s special messengers.*
- **Describe [faith](#) as believing in God even though we cannot see him.**
- *Describe how God gives us many gifts in the universe.*
- *State how when we are afraid we can ask God to help us.*

Standard 2 **SACRED SCRIPTURE:** Read, comprehend and articulate salvation history as conveyed in God’s revelation through Sacred Scripture.

- **Identify some major people of the [Old Testament](#) (such as Abraham and Sarah, Noah, Moses, etc.) through story telling and drama.**
- **State that Jesus belonged to a family that loved and cared for each other, called the [Holy Family](#).**
- **State how Jesus grew up in a family and was obedient to his mother [Mary](#) and foster father [Joseph](#). (Lk 2:51)**
- **Show understanding that when Jesus grew up he taught people about how God cares for them.**
- *Recall how Jesus healed sick people and fed poor people.*
- *State that Jesus told the people that they should ask God for what they need.*
- **State how Jesus loved his friends all through his life.**
- **Show basic understanding that Jesus died loving even those who killed him. (Lk 23:34)**
- **Retell the Resurrection story.**
- *State basic understanding that we follow Jesus as his friends did.*
- **State that Jesus always loves little children no matter what they might do.**



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Key Element II: Liturgy and Sacraments - How We Celebrate

“Faith and worship are as closely related to one another as they were in the early Church: faith gathers the community for worship, and worship renews the faith of the community... In her Liturgy, the Church celebrates what she professes and lives above all the Paschal Mystery, by which Christ accomplished the work of our salvation.” (NDC no. 32)

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of the ***Liturgy and Sacraments*** in your home: *Parents teach young children the meaning of family and ritual. Participation in family rituals (such as bedtime rituals, family prayer, seasonal celebrations, etc.) by preschoolers forms the basis for their future understanding of worship. Attending Mass with your child is an excellent opportunity to teach them about the various religious signs and symbols.*

Standard 3 SACRAMENTS: Understand and participate in the sacraments of the Church as effective signs of God's grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church.

- Identify **baptism** as the way we become children of God.
- Identify the bread and wine at Mass as signs of God's presence with us.
- Identify a **sacrament** as a sign of God's love for us.
- Identify the **tabernacle** as a place where the *Blessed Sacrament* is kept in the form of bread.

Standard 4 LITURGY: Understand and celebrate the liturgical rites of the Church as expressed in the liturgy year and epitomized in the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.

- Identify **Good Friday** as the day we remember Jesus giving His life for us.
- Recognize Easter as celebrating Christ's **Resurrection** from the dead.
- Name the liturgical seasons of **Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter**.
- Make the sign of the cross properly.
- Show basic understanding of **Advent** and **Lent** as special times of preparation for Christmas and Easter.
- Identify the **priest** as someone chosen by God to lead us in prayer at Mass.
- Show recognition that the Church celebrates the lives of holy people called **saints**.
- Identify religious signs and symbols as objects that tell us about God and his people.
- Demonstrate understanding that God forgives us when we are sorry.
- Recognize that **sacramentals** are sacred signs of the Church's heritage, such as crucifix, statues, rosary, Bible, candles, holy water, and blessings.

Key Element III: Morality ***- How We Live***

“Christ is the norm of morality. ‘Christian morality consists in following Jesus Christ, in abandoning oneself to him, in letting oneself be transformed by his grace and renewed by his mercy, gifts which come to us in the living communion of his Church.’” (NDC no. 42)

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of ***Morality*** in your home: *Parents help children to learn to love as Christ loves. This moral formation begins in the home through parental age appropriate example and through opportunities to teach young children the difference between right and wrong. Even at this young age, children learn there are consequences to their actions for good or for ill.*

Standard 5 Conscience: Develop a moral conscience informed by church teachings.

- Describe Jesus' loving actions in stories, songs, and pictures.
- Give verbal examples of loving actions.
- Demonstrate loving actions with which they are familiar.



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- Exhibit awareness that rules teach one how to act at home, at school, and in the community.
- State awareness that God forgives when people are sorry.

Standard 6 **Christian Living:** Understand and live the moral teachings of the Church through a life of discipleship in Jesus Christ expressed in love for God, conversion, positive self-image, personal integrity, social justice, the dignity of the human person and love of neighbor.

- **State that I am a child of God, both created by and loved by him.**
- **Describe ways we can respond to Jesus' call to love God and love our neighbor (See John 13: 34-35.)**
- **Identify why we have rules in class and at home to help treat each other fairly and to respect each other as children of God.**
- **Recall that when other children are doing something wrong to us or others we should tell them to stop or tell parents/teachers (See Matthew 18:12, 15.)**
- *Describe ways that we can practice the charity of the Lord in good works and love for all by showing respect for self and for others in our family, parish and school.*
- *Give examples of how we share love in community and help one another be healthy and happy.*
- **Understand that how we treat others and the things of creation is how we show that we are followers of Jesus.**
- **Demonstrate the ability to express sorrow when we have hurt others and forgive others when they say they are sorry for what they did (See Matthew 18:22.)**
- *Give an example of forgiveness with a brother or a sister or a parent.*

Key Element IV: Prayer

- How We Pray

“God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer” (CCC no. 1075). His initiative comes first; the human response to his initiative is itself prompted by the grace of the Holy Spirit... In prayer, the Holy Spirit not only reveals the identity of the Triune God to human persons but also reveals the identity of human persons to themselves. (NDC no. 34)

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of **Prayer** in your home: *Families pray simple prayers with children and establish patterns of prayer that are comfortable for them as a family. Spontaneous prayer, meal prayers, bedtime prayers and prayers at special family times are all excellent ways to introduce prayer to the preschool child. At this young age, teaching children rote prayers like the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be are learned through repetition.*

Standard 7 **PRAYER:** Know and participate in the Catholic tradition of prayer and acknowledge prayer as the primary way we deepen our knowledge of God in the community.

- *Share the simple prayers in the morning, evening and at mealtime done at home.*
- *Recall that we pray spontaneously on special occasions.*
- **Participate in prayer alone, in class, with the family and at church.**
- **Recognize that we can pray to God to help ourselves and others, and that this is a prayer of petition.**
- **Identify that we remember and pray for the dead; say a prayer for someone special who has died.**
- **Memorize and recite the Sign of the Cross and the Glory Be.**
- *Recall that we ask Blessed Mother Mary and the saints to pray to Jesus for us.*
- **State that "Amen" is an end to prayers and a yes to God.**



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- Identify the church as a sacred place where the people of God gather to pray and to worship God.
- *Demonstrate how we respect others while participating in the liturgy.*

Memorize the Sign of the Cross and the Glory Be

Become familiar with the other prayers listed here:

Grace before and after meals

Before

Bless us, O Lord,
and these Your gifts,
which we are about to receive
from Your bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

After

We give you thanks,
almighty God,
for these and all Your blessings which we
have received
from your bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen

Sign of the Cross [CCC no. 2157; cf. 786] [*Note: The directions for movement while saying this are in italics and parenthesis by each phrase*]

In the name
of the Father, (*with the right hand, touch the forehead*)
and of the Son, (*touch the chest*)
and of the Holy Spirit. (*touch the left then the right shoulder*) Amen.

Glory Be (Gloria Patri)

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen.

Angel of God (Prayer to the Guardian Angel)

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Key Element V: Education for Living in the Christian Community ***- How We Live in the Community, the Church***

“We were created as social beings who find fulfillment only in love – for God and for our neighbor. If we are truly to gaze upon him who is the source of our joy, we need to do so as members of the people of God (cf. Spe Salvi no. 14). If this seems counter-cultural, that is simply further evidence of the urgent need for a renewed evangelization of culture.” (Benedict XVI – 16 April 2008 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception)”

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the ***Education for Living in the Christian Community*** in your home: *Parents model community life to their young children through active participation in parish life. Even simply actions, like talking to the priest and other parishioners after Mass, show children the value of community life. Setting aside time to be with preschoolers to share the events of the day, to hug them, and carefully listen to them are some ways parents nurture the faith of the child by being models of loving service and care.*

Standard 8 **CATHOLIC CHURCH:** Understand and appreciate the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ, the community of believers, as expressed in the Church's origin, mission of evangelization, hierarchical structure, marks, charisms, members and the communion of saints.

- State basic understanding that I belong to the **Church** because I am baptized.
- Tell how our parish community is like a family.
- Identify that the **Church** is as big as the world.
- State that Jesus gave the Church as a sign of his living presence in the world.
- Give examples of **saints** who loved God and others very much.



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Standard 9 **ECUMENISM:** Understand and participate in the call of the Church to be a sign of unity in the world through knowledge of and collaboration with other Catholic (Eastern), Orthodox, and Christian churches.

- **State that some of our relatives, playmates, and neighbors may worship in other Christian communities (denominations) that believe in Jesus Christ.**

Standard 10 **CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES AND RELATIONSHIPS:** Apply Catholic principles to interpersonal relations.

- *Show ways of caring for God's gift of the body.*
- **Recognize that babies are a gift from God.**
- **Know that followers of Jesus show Respect for Life.**
- *Understand that each person is different and special.*
- **Distinguish between respectful touches and disrespectful touches.** (*Also see Virtus Teaching Touching Safety Program materials*)

Standard 11 **VOCATION:** Understand and undertake discipleship in Christ responding in faith by participating in the mission of the Church through living a specific call in the life of the Church.

- **State that God calls me to love and serve him.**
- *Show a basic understanding that my life is a special gift from God to share with others.*
- *Identify my parents, teachers, and other adults in the community as God's helpers in my life.*
- **State that the Church has special people who help us to learn about God and to live as followers of Jesus: specifically, priests, religious brothers and sisters, missionaries (lay and religious).**

Key Element VI: Evangelization and Apostolic Life

- ***How we, as Individuals and Community, Live in Service to the World***

“Only if we are aware of our calling, as individuals and as a community, to be part of God’s family as his sons and daughters, will we be able to generate a new vision and muster new energy in the service of a truly integral humanism. The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God.” (Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate, no. 78)

At-Home Ideas:

At the Pre-school level, these are things you can do as a family to strengthen the teaching of ***Evangelization and Apostolic Life*** in your home: *An apostolic life is passed on in its practice. A sense of security and trust in the home are also of vital importance as a basis upon which faith builds. It is from this basis of love and trusts that children will later in life acquire a desire to reach out to others to share their faith.*

Standard 12 **CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING:** Know critique and apply social justice and stewardship principles to societal situations in a way that acknowledges and affirms the dignity of the human person and community.

- **Know that we respect and are kind to all because all are made in the image and likeness of God.**
- **Recognize that it is wrong to say bad things about other people.**
- **Give examples of how we show our love of our family by helping at home.**
- **Participate in age-appropriate activities that support Respect for Life.**
- **Recognize that all of God's creation needs care.**
- **Recall that all creation is a gift of God.**



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Standard 13 **INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE:** Understand and participate in the call of the Church to be a sign of unity in the world through knowledge of and collaboration with Jews, Muslims, and all faith traditions.

- **Understand that not everyone is a Catholic or Christian.**
- **Know that not everyone is a Catholic, and that some of our relatives, playmates, and neighbors may know about God in other ways.**

Standard 14 **MISSIONARY VOCATION:** Demonstrate an appreciation for Catholic missionary and evangelization efforts through our parish community, its culture, worship, sacramental life, and service.

- **Explain that Jesus asks us to share the story of his love for all, our friendship with him, and our love of his Church with those we meet. (Mt 28:19-20)**
- *Help Realize that Jesus asks us to share the Good News of the Gospel and our Catholic Faith with those we meet.*
- **Explain that we are followers of Jesus.**
- **Know that we learn how to help others by helping our family and friends.**
- *Participate in missionary projects of the parish and community.*

School-age children should receive formal and systematic catechesis in a parish-based catechetical program, a Catholic school, or a program of home-based catechesis in which the content of the faith and the experience of Christian life is presented authentically and completely." (NDC, 204)