

Curriculum Tips for Becoming Disciples

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Education for Community Life

Jesus said to his disciples: *“Love one another as I have loved you.”* (John 13:34)

This command guides the disciple’s life, no matter what age he or she is. **Catechesis, in the family, the classroom and the parish is a place of apprenticeship in Catholic living**, expressed in a spirit of simplicity, special concern for the poor, care for the stranger, fraternal correction and love, common prayer and mutual forgiveness.



Key Concepts

-From kindergarten on, children should know that with family, parish and school, we practice the charity of the Lord in good works and love for all.

-We share love in community in ways that help one another be healthy and happy.

-Common prayer, including family prayer is a way of life for Christians.



In the story of the Good Samaritan, our “neighbor” is the one we most often would ignore, criticize, or abandon. Yet it is precisely this person whom we are called to love and serve with compassionate hearts. Likewise the family, school and parish must attend to the needs of the members of the society in which it lives if it is to fully live the Gospel message.

Look at how the lifestyles of the family, school and parish reflect the values of faith, as opposed to the values of the dominant culture.

- ◆ Do we value equality over domination or status?
- ◆ Sharing and simplicity over possession? Creating over consuming?
- ◆ Mercy over revenge?
- ◆ Reaching out to welcome and learn about others rather than self-protecting?

Participate in works of mercy and justice.



- ◆ Visit the sick and homebound.
- ◆ Fast from fast food or snacks and give the money to a cause that feeds the hungry.
- ◆ Assist in food drives year round.
- ◆ Contribute to the “poor box” in your parish.
- ◆ Welcome newcomers to the community and parish.
- ◆ Help the parish with a fix-it or clean-up project.
- ◆ Write letters to congress and other authorities with ideas for making things better in your country and community

Praying Together in our Homes and Classrooms

Praying together is a great way to celebrate the presence of God in our everyday lives.



- * Invite spontaneous prayer.
- * Join in prayers from the Catholic tradition.
- * Create simple rituals with seasonal symbols, candles etc.
- * Share silence together.
- * Recall times when God was present in moments of love, forgiveness, joy etc.
- * Pray the Psalms.
- * Sing a hymn.
- * Write a prayer of thanksgiving.
- * Ask God's blessing on one another.
- * Imagine Jesus with you.
- * Keep a "Remember with Love" list of people, situations and events you as a group are praying for.
- * Pray with a religious painting or icon.
- * Display drawings and photos of people you are praying for.
- * Pray for people in need mentioned on the TV news or in the newspaper.



Check Curriculum Guide for traditional prayers suggested for memorization and group practice at appropriate grade levels.

A Prayer of Forgiveness

Close your eyes and imagine a quiet, still place where you feel peaceful. As you slowly breath in and out, say the words, "I am loved. I am happy. I am God's Child." Inhale love, peace and joy. Exhale love, peace and joy.

Let go of any thoughts of guilt, fear, worry, anger or resentment.

Feel the sun shining on you, full of God's love...God's forgiveness...God's peace. Imagine that light shining all within your body, bringing you healing and embrace.



Think of someone you need to forgive, who annoys you or causes you stress. In your imagination, see this person walking into the light of God's love. See this light of love, peace and forgiveness shining throughout this person's body, bringing him or her healing and embrace.

Say to yourself, "I forgive you and me. I let go of all guilt, anger, bitterness and resentment. The light of God's love that I experience in me I extend to you freely. I see this light joining us together. We are one in God's family."



Thank God for this healing experience.

Parent Page: Bringing the Gospel Home

We began Year A of the Liturgical Year in Advent. During these year, we will hear Gospel readings on Sundays from the Gospel of Matthew. Here are some simple ways parents can engage their children in a discussion of that week's Gospel reading.



January 9 The Baptism of the Lord

"This is my Beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Mt. 3: 17) We are each precious children in God's eyes. Have each family member mention one good quality for each of the other family members.

January 16 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near." (Mt. 4:17) What needs to change in the family's everyday life for the Kingdom of God to reign in your home? What change can each family member make?

January 23 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger for justice, the merciful, the pure, the peacemakers." (Mt. 5:3-9) What difficulties is each family member facing this week? Which Beatitude do you want to ask God to help you work on?

January 30 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Mt. 5:16) Who has been a light to you in your life? Think of ways each person in the family can spread more of Christ's light to others.



February 6 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Mt. 5:19) What are some of the family rules that reflect God's 10 commandments or Jesus' command to "Love one another"?



February 13

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven." (Mt. 5:44-45) Who are some people that persecute you or are hard to love? How might your love and prayer for them turn things around—in them or in you?

February 20 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Do not worry about tomorrow. Will not God who cares for the birds of the air all the more provide for you, O you of little faith? Your heavenly Father knows what you need. So seek first the Kingdom of God." (Mt. 6:27-33) What things does each family member worry about? How can you let God be there for you?



February 27th 9th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts of them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain and winds came but the house did not collapse." (Mt. 7:24-25) What is the worst storm you remember? When can your life seem stormy? What does it mean to build your house on rock, as a Christian?

March 6 10th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." (Mt. 9:13) Lent begins on March 9. How will your family observe this season of conversion?

Celebrating Ordinary Time



Make Ordinary Time Clocks on paper plates, with a collage of pictures representing the ordinary things of our life for which we are grateful to God. These ordinary things are signs of God’s goodness in our lives, as we begin to count the weeks “ordinally” or “in order” (2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday of the year etc.) Put clock hands on the clock with a paper clasp. Hang these on a bulletin board or in the child’s bedroom, along with this prayer:

Loving God, open us to your presence in every second, every minute, and every hour of every day.

Your presence to us at all times makes every minute of ordinary time sacred.

Bless these clocks that represent the time in which we live.

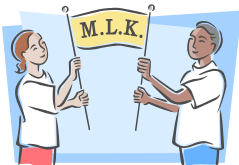
Let them remind us to be open to you in all the love, goodness, beauty, joy, sorrow and struggles that come our way.

Teach us to treasure time and to receive it as a gift from you.

Let us use our time well, by praising you, and by doing things that help others. Amen.



January 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



1. Play King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. How does this reflect the values of Jesus?
2. What did King do to try to make his dream come true? How was his life in some ways like that of Jesus?
3. Has progress been made? How much further do we need to go? What can each of us do?
4. What are your dreams for a better world?
5. What was Jesus’ dream for our life on earth?

