

Curriculum Tips for Becoming Disciples

Volume 7

Office of Religious Education, Diocese of Wilmington

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Welcome Back, Catechists!

Catechists offer young people:

- Knowledge of the Faith
- Liturgical Education
- Moral Formation
- Teaching on How to Pray
- Education for Community Life
- Missionary Initiation

A tremendous resource is available to catechists in the curriculum outcome guide “Becoming Disciples.” It can help religion teachers stay on track and cover all the important learning outcomes for each grade level.

But, God knows, the greatest resource the Diocese of Wilmington has is YOU!

Thank you for your dedication.

Remember!!

The present and past issues of “Curriculum Tips” Newsletter as well as the most accurate version of Becoming Disciples curriculum are available on the Diocesan website: cdow.org. Religious Education Elementary Curriculum

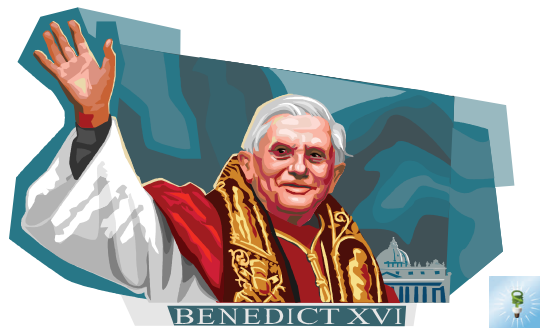
The Year of the Priest

Another wonderful teachable moment! The Vatican has established 2009-2010 as “The Year of the Priest.” Bishop Malooly presided on June 18 at a Vespers service in which he affirmed the work of the priests of the Diocese of Wilmington and invited them to a year of spiritual renewal.

Along this line, Pope Benedict XVI, in his opening celebration in Rome said, “The church needs priests who are holy, ministers who help the faithful experience the merciful love of the Lord and who are convinced witnesses of that love.”

One of the focuses of “Curriculum Tips” this year will be the important role of the priest in both the proclamation of God’s Word and in the celebration of sacraments, particularly Eucharist and Reconciliation. The newsletter will also look at what it means to be a shepherd of God’s People, in imitation of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and how all these ideas can be effectively conveyed to youth of all ages.

The priesthood of the faithful is another related concept which can be taught. This common priesthood is acquired through baptism and is exercised by all people, including ordained priests, by witnessing in word and deed to Christ in one’s life and by full participation in worship through prayer and the sacraments. Many outcomes in the curriculum address both aspects of priesthood and will be explored.



Before You Begin... Review!



Every good teacher knows that as children learn new concepts, they need to connect these new ideas to something else that is already part of their experience. So every grade level in “Becoming Disciples” Curriculum Guide begins with a section that lists all the key concepts that were taught in the previous grade level.

1. **Creatively present a segment of the review material.**
2. **Give children time to study the material together in small groups.**
3. **Play a review game to reinforce the material and add a little fun and motivation.**

Sports Games: Divide the class into teams. Either on the chalkboard or letting the students move from chair to chair around a “diamond,” simulate the game of baseball so that each correct answer advances a student to the next base. Of course, the students get three swings at the answer before they are “out.” The team must get three outs (or run through the whole lineup) before it is the other team’s turn at bat.

Variations can be done with football (advancing 10 yards with each correct answer) or basketball (a nerf ball can be tossed into a trashcan when a correct answer is given) or golf (teams take turns answering and putting the ball into a can .)



Other Games That Make Learning Fun

- Read out a number of True or False statements. If the students think the answer is true they should stand up. If they think it is false, they sit down.
- Have the students jump rope to the rhythm of lists of things to be learned, such as the mysteries of the rosary, the ten commandments, or the 12 apostles.



- Memorize verses from the psalms or prayers by clapping or walking in rhythm. Combining speaking and movement increases retention.
- Hop Along the Path—List the various events of a Bible story, lines in the Creed, or steps in the ritual of a sacrament on paper plates taped to the floor. Have the students move in the correct order from plate to plate. (Variation: dribble a ball along the correctly ordered path.)
- Charades—Have the student wordlessly act out people and things that have been studied
- Create a Jeopardy Board with categories such as “Definitions,” “Church Calendar” and “People in the Bible.”

Missionary Initiation Outcomes

“Every means should be used to encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life and to awaken missionary vocations.” (Introduction to Missionary Initiation)

What Parents and Catechists Can Do to Foster Priestly Vocations



1. Realize the unique role of the priest at Mass.

Have the children watch during Mass for:

- The order in which the priest enters the church during the procession (a sign of humility)
- How the priest invites people to begin the opening prayer (“Let us pray” gathers the people together to pray as one.)
- The greeting that the priest offers the people, to which they respond: “And also with you.”
- The words the priest says when he extends his hands over the bread and wine and prays for the coming of the Holy Spirit
- The words the priest says as he consecrates the bread and wine
- The Person of the Trinity to whom the priest addresses the Eucharistic prayer (The priest is the ordained representative both of the people and of Christ, praying to the Father.)

2. Know that the Church asks for prayer from all Christians for vocations to the priesthood and religious life to continue the work of the Church.

- Add a prayer for vocations when praying together.
- Pray that all leaders in the Church may be models of holiness and inspiration to others.
- Encourage young people to consider their gifts and interests and pray about whether God might be calling them to consider a vocation of service to the Church.
- Attend the diocesan Mass on Tuesday of Holy Week, where priests’ vocation to the Church is highlighted.



3. Recognize that there are leaders that care for the Church: The Pope, Bishops, and priests, and learn their names.

- Invite the priests of your parish to visit you in your classroom or home and ask them about why they became a priest and what they enjoy doing most as a priest.
- Write a letter to one of your Church leaders, thanking them for their service and asking them questions about their work.
- Go to a liturgy at which the Bishop is presiding. Have your photo taken.
- Ask the priest or another church leader if there is some way you can help out in the work of the parish.
- Visit with a seminarian and ask about his call to the priesthood.

(These outcomes are from Grade 1; 6. c, d, and e)

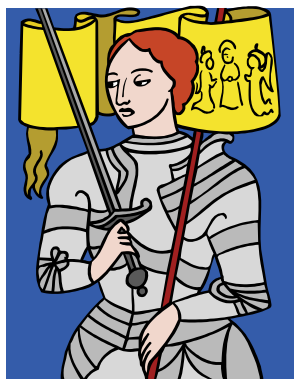
Saints Who Were Priests

This All Saints Day have your students research, role play or come dressed as a saint who served through the priesthood, people such as St. John Vianney, patron of priests, or St. John Neumann, first American bishop canonized a saint. Check under “Liturgical Education” for saints about whom the students at your grade level should be learning.



Every Christian is baptized into “The priesthood of the faithful.” Christians are given through the sacrament of Baptism the great dignity of being:

- 1. “Priestly,” that is, able to actively participate in worshiping God through the sacraments***
- 2. “Prophetic,” that is, able to speak and model God’s Word to the world***
- 3. “Kingly,” that is, able to lead and serve through the various gifts of the Spirit that they have been given.***



**St. Joan of Arc
and many other saints
are great examples of the
priesthood of the laity.**

“Knowledge of the Faith” *Outcomes on Baptism*



Kindergarten—“Know that through Baptism we become, in a special way, children of God and members of the Church.” (o)

Grade 1—“Know that through our Baptism we are made children of God, members of the Body of Christ and are brought into the Church.” (y)

Grade 2- “Understand that we receive grace through the seven sacraments: Baptism...” (1)

Grade 3—“Define that the Church is a family and members, by their faith and Baptism, are called the People of God.” (k)

Grade 5- “Know that the liturgical life of the Church revolves around seven sacraments all instituted by Christ; these sacraments give grace through the word of the Holy Spirit and are Baptism...” (m)

Grade 6—“Examine that through Baptism, our lives in Christ are a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ; this should be reflected in the way each Christian lives his/her life. (s)

Grade 8—“Know that in the Rite of Baptism, at the blessing of the water, the Church points to the Paschal Mystery. (1)