

RELIGION CURRICULUM

EIGHTH GRADE

*Proclaim the Word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient;
convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.
(2 Timothy 4:2)*

Focus: Church History – By the grace of the Holy Spirit and with the leadership of popes and bishops, the Church continues the saving work of Christ. All Christians are called to continue the work and witness of the apostles for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Faith Background

Externally, eighth grade students appear to be less religious. This is usually the result of an inability to be expressive about personal matters. In reality, these children have the capacity to be more religious. They are dropping their childish appreciations of God, faith, the Church and religion and are coming to terms with some of the basic questions of life.

Students in the eighth grade have a basic need to disagree with adult authority and their own former ways of thinking and relating. They are beginning to re-evaluate and integrate a more mature set of values.

Creed

- 1. God – The student will explain how God reveals Himself to His people.**
 - a. Name sources of God's revelation.
 - b. Describe how creation itself reveals God.
 - c. Describe how God's self-revelation continues.
 - d. Explain the Church's role in God's revelation.
 - e. Explain how revelation reaches its ultimate expression in Jesus.

- 2. Jesus – The student will recognize that Jesus reveals Himself as a servant sent by and acting for the Father.**
 - a. Recognize that Jesus' mission is a continuing one – to bring to God the Father.
 - b. Explain how Jesus' Biblical titles (e.g. Suffering Servant, Messiah, Prophet, Son of God) reveal who He is and what He has done.
 - c. Describe how Jesus' life gives us an example of how to live.
 - d. Explain how Jesus offers the Beatitudes as a way of life for His followers.

- e. Describe how Jesus reveals His love and saves us from sin and death through His death and resurrection.
- f. Explain how Jesus is present today through prayer, the Gospels, the Church and sacraments.

3. Holy Spirit – The student will understand that Jesus Christ is present in the Church through the Holy Spirit.

- a. Describe the first Pentecost.
- b. Explain how the Holy Spirit strengthens us to follow Christ and to live the Gospel values.
- c. Recognize that the Holy Spirit has helped the Church to renew and form itself.

4. Sacred Scripture – The student will grow in his or her understanding of Scripture.

- a. Explain how the authors of the New Testament were influenced by the culture and time in which they lived and by the needs of the people for whom they wrote.
- b. Understand that the Acts of the Apostles describes how the early Christian community lived and gave witness.
- c. Explain how the Letters were written to communities in the early Church by Paul, and other leaders, to encourage the Christians to be strong in their witness to Christ.

5. Church – The student will explore the history of the Catholic Church.

- a. Explain life in Jerusalem in the early Church.
- b. Describe life in the Roman Territories.
- c. Explain the results of the Peace of Constantinople.
- d. Explain Charlemagne's role in Church history.
- e. Explain the effects of the 4th Lateran Council.
- f. Describe monasticism and its effects in history.
- g. Explain the Church's growth in the time of Mendicants.
- h. Explain the role of the early Church's "Fathers".
- i. Explain the Church's growth in the time of the Crusaders.
- j. Describe St. Jerome's, Augustine's, and Ambrose's contributions to the Church.
- k. Explain the importance of Thomas Aquinas.
- l. Describe the great schism in the Church.
- m. Describe the cause and effects of the Reformation.
- n. Describe events that took place in Augsburg.
- o. Describe the cause and effect of the Council of Trent.
- p. Describe the Counter-Reformation.
- q. Describe the Missionary Church.
- r. Time line the growth of the Church in America.
- s. Explain the importance of American Church figures.
- t. Name and tell the significance of leaders in each era.

- u. Name and explain the different eras of the Church's history.
- v. Describe critical events in the Church's history.
- w. Describe issues and conflicts in the Church's history.
- x. Describe new directions the Church has taken.
- y. Plan a Mass.

6. Councils – The student will define Councils and key points in Church history.

- a. Define Council as ecumenical.
- b. Associate Councils with problems and decisions.
- c. Associate Jerusalem with the baptism of Gentiles.
- d. Associate Nicea with the divinity of Jesus.
- e. Associate Constantinople with the Holy Spirit.
- f. Associate Ephesus with Mary, the Mother of God.
- g. Associate Chalcedon with the humanity of Jesus.
- h. Associate Florence with the Eastern Church.
- i. Associate Trent with the sacraments.
- j. Associate Vatican I with the Pope's infallibility.
- k. Describe Vatican II's role in the modern world.
- l. Describe Vatican II's impact on the liturgy and on ecumenism and evangelization.

7. Heaven – The student will describe Heaven as sharing God's life fully.

- a. Describe Heaven as a state of being, rather than a place.
- b. Select passages where Jesus speaks of Heaven.
- c. Explain judgment as a time for reward, celebration, justice, and mercy.

Sacraments

1. Sacraments – The student will understand that sacraments celebrate the personal and communal faith relationships Christians have with Christ.

- a. Recognize that the proclamation of the Word is an important part of all sacraments.
- b. Recognize that sacramental actions of the Church originated in Jewish rituals.

Christian Living

1. Christian Response – The student will identify Christian service as a response to the needs of the community.

- a. Explain a life of sharing, service, and witness as part of the total mission of the Church.
- b. Participate in Christian service activities.

2. **Morality – The student will recognize that we are called to union with God by turning from sin and opening our hearts to His grace.**
 - a. Explain how sin is the greatest obstacle to loving God and working out our salvation.
 - b. Understand that sin occurs when moral laws are knowingly and deliberately violated.
 - c. Describe conversion as a healing process in which weakness, selfishness, and sin is overcome.
 - d. Describe times when disobedience is allowed.

3. **Social Issues – The student will explore social issues.**
 - a. Describe the causes and effects of *hunger*. Suggest solutions.
 - b. Describe non-physical types of *hunger*.
 - c. Give the causes and effects of *violence* and *crime*. Suggest solutions.
 - d. Name the causes and effects of *war*. Propose means to maintain peace.
 - e. Discuss *population growth* and growth trends.
 - f. Describe the problems of *over-population* and the need for balance.
 - g. Explain the importance of *conserving resources*.
 - h. Describe the types, causes, and effects of *discrimination*.
 - i. Name, compare, and explain the different types of *poverty*. Describe possible solutions.
 - j. Describe the causes and effects of the present *divorce* rate. Suggest preventative actions.
 - k. Distinguish between *separation* and *divorce*.
 - l. Explain *annulment*.
 - m. Explain how all *life* is a gift from God. Describe every person's right to life.
 - n. Explain why the following are life issues:
 - **Abortion*
 - **Euthanasia*
 - **Capital Punishment*
 - **Pollution*
 - o. Identify various types of *drugs*. Describe the effects of drugs.
 - p. Explain how humans abuse and misuse the gift of *sexuality*.
 - q. Explain the causes and effects of the following:
 - **Promiscuity*
 - **Premarital sex*
 - **Homosexual acts*
 - **Rape*
 - **AIDS*
 - **Sexually transmitted diseases*
 - r. Understand that everyone has a right to personal *privacy*.
 - s. Describe the effects of *pollution*. Describe our responsibility to balance nature.

- 4. Human Life – The student will value the sacredness of life.**
- a. Respect individual differences as gifts to be appreciated.
 - b. Recognize the dangers of alcohol and drugs.
 - c. Recognize the different ways of expressing love for others.
 - d. Understand that sexual intercourse within a marriage is an expression of love between a husband and wife.
 - e. Understand the Church's teaching against pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relations.
 - f. Understand the Church's teaching against pornography, prostitution, and homosexual acts.
 - g. Understand the Church's teaching against abortion and euthanasia.
 - h. Recognize our responsibility for our actions and the importance of avoiding people and situations, which may be dangerous.

Prayer

- 1. Prayer – The student will experience different forms of prayer: shared prayer, spontaneous prayer, reflective prayer, and praying with scripture.**
- a. Make the sign of the cross reverently.
 - b. Pray together as a class, school community, family and church.
 - c. Understand and pray the Lord's Prayer.
 - d. Pray the Hail Mary.
 - e. Pray the Blessing Before Meals.
 - f. Pray the Glory Be.
 - g. Pray the Act of Contrition.
 - h. Pray the Apostles' Creed.
 - i. Offer God thanks and praise.
 - j. Pray for personal needs and the needs of others.
 - k. Pray for the forgiveness of sins.
 - l. Recognize the Spiritual Works of Mercy and the Corporal Works of Mercy.
 - m. Recognize the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love.
 - n. Recognize the Magnificat.
 - o. Pray the Morning Offering.
 - p. Recognize some Psalms.
 - q. Recognize Scriptural prayer.
 - r. Recognize the Confiteor.
 - s. Memorize the Nicene Creed.