

Saint Matthew Catholic Church Religious Education



**Parent and Student Handbook
2026-2027**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE
Letter to Parents and Students	3
Religious Education Mission Statement	4
Purpose and Tasks of Catechesis	5
Parents' Rights & Responsibilities	6
Students' Responsibilities	7-8
General Information	8-11
Class Arrival & Departure	
Class Times	
Rosary, Adoration, and Benediction	
Class Cancellations	
Absences	
Tardiness	
Classroom Discipline	
Learning Disabilities/Health Related Issues	
Correspondence	
Health and Safety	11-14
Safety Monitor	
Cell Phones	
New Safety Standards	
Classroom Locks	
Security Cameras	
Safety Drills	
Health and Well-being	
Circle of Grace	
Text Series	15-18
Curriculum	19-25

September 2026

Dear Parents and Students,

I am thankful for your prayers and support of the Religious Education Program; it is a pleasure serving you. I look forward to working very closely with all our families as we grow in the love of Jesus Christ.

With you, the parents, who have the primary duty and responsibility of educating your children, we will strive toward the goal of the children knowing and remembering the truths of our Catholic Faith. Together we will increase our knowledge, love, and service to God and our parish family.

This handbook is designed to provide an explanation of the curriculum, philosophy, and expectations of the St. Matthew's Religious Education Program. Your parent folder also contains a calendar for the academic year.

Please join us for Adoration and the Rosary led by the children 10 minutes prior to class followed by Benediction for the first 10 minutes of class. After Benediction, the students will report to their classrooms with the catechist. You are welcome to stay in the church and pray (please include a prayer for the RE Program).

If you need to contact me for any reason, please feel free to do so at (540) 582-5575 or stmatthewre@comcast.net. Again, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to you. It is my pleasure to work with you in this new academic year.

Many blessings,

Danielle Houck

Danielle Houck
Director, Religious Education

SAINT MATTHEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Religious Education Program at St. Matthew Catholic Church is to look upon each child as created in the image and likeness of God and as a reflection of His goodness. Being a living witness to the Gospel will be central to the development of each student. Therefore, at Saint Matthew's, learning about Jesus and His message is essential to knowing Him, loving Him, and serving Him always. The core elements listed below form the foundation of St. Matthew's Religious Education Program.

- ✝ **It is Christ, The Incarnate Word and Son of God, who is taught—everything else is taught with reference to Him—and it is Christ alone who teaches. (*Catechesi Tradendae* #6)**
- ✝ **The dignity of the individual, as a unique child of God, is nurtured and developed.**
- ✝ **Parents are recognized as the primary educators of their children.**
- ✝ **The doctrine of the Catholic Faith is presented in its fullness and entirety as both knowledge to be *learned* and a life to be *lived*.**
- ✝ **By His life and teaching, Jesus attested to the importance of keeping the Ten Commandments. The gift of the Commandments is the gift of God Himself and His holy will. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* #2059)**
- ✝ **Life in the Sacraments is central in developing the Catholic Faith.**
- ✝ **The *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* and the *Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist* is the center of our Faith.**
- ✝ **Weekly attendance at Mass and regular celebration of the Sacrament of Penance are essential.**
- ✝ **Class lessons are based upon the Deposit of Faith, the body of divine Knowledge revealed by God through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition; we are aided in our understanding of divine revelation by the authentic teaching and interpretation provided by the popes and bishops under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**
- ✝ **Prayer is a source for growth in spiritual life; Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament with the praying of the Rosary take place at the start of every class to cultivate a life of prayer.**
- ✝ **Our Blessed Mother is the first disciple of Jesus and a model of holiness that the faithful should strive to imitate.**
- ✝ **The lives of the saints will be studied as examples of holiness.**

Purpose and Tasks of Catechesis

Catechesis is the word used to describe the essential ministry of the Church through which the teachings of Christ have been passed on to believers throughout the ages.

Catechists teach the faith, pointing always to Christ and His Truth, and form their students in knowledge and practice of our religion, through which we worship God. “Catechesis is that particular form of the ministry of the word which matures initial conversion to make it into a living, explicit, and fruitful confession of faith” (*National Directory for Catechesis*, p. 54).

Catechesis comprises six (6) fundamental tasks to achieve its objective of formation of disciples of Jesus Christ:

- It promotes knowledge of the faith
- It promotes a knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the Sacraments
- It promotes moral formation in Jesus Christ
- It teaches the Christian how to pray with Christ
- It prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate in the life and mission of the Church
- It promotes a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society

At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father. . .who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever. To catechize is to reveal in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfillment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by Him. Only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.

In catechesis, Christ, the Incarnate Word and Son of God, . . . is taught– everything else is taught with reference to Him and it is Christ alone who teaches.

Catechism of the Catholic Church #426-427

Parents' Rights & Responsibilities

“The Lord is entrusting to parents the growth of a child of God, a brother or sister of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and a member of the Church.”

Familiaris Consortio, Pope Saint John Paul II Paragraph 39

Parents are the primary religious educators of their children. The home is the domestic Church and the place where a child first experiences the Catholic Faith. The family is where faith is learned, lived, and nurtured. You teach primarily by the example you set. It is important for children to experience the love of God in their homes. The Religious Education program works in partnership with parents in order to assist them in living their vocations as educators of their children. This program should merely complement, not replace, the catechesis children receive in the home.

The Religious Education Program assists parents in their God-given role as educators of the Faith by

- ✚ providing the truth of the Roman Catholic Faith as revealed by God through Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition, and the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church, and explained by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.
- ✚ providing weekly religious education classes for children in a classroom setting or at-home learning.
- ✚ providing weekly homework that students and parents should work on together.

All Christian education finds its source within the sacramental life of the Church. Therefore, parents should assist their children by

- ✚ recognizing that it is of utmost importance that children are given the opportunity for attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation as well as regular participation in the Sacrament of Penance.
- ✚ understanding that knowledge of the Catholic Faith that is not lived out by the practice of the sacramental life is empty knowledge.
- ✚ making every effort to have your child attend class regularly on-site or at home.

Students' Responsibilities

Every student has the right and privilege to learn. Students should conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a classroom environment. To foster that environment, all students will observe the Student Code of Conduct.

Student Code of Conduct

Students

- ✚ will be reverent during our period of Adoration.
- ✚ will be prepared for class.
- ✚ will complete assignments and participate in class.
- ✚ will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers, parents, and fellow students.
- ✚ will use appropriate language.
- ✚ will respect church property.
- ✚ will follow the dress code.
- ✚ will report to their teacher or Director of Religious Education anything that causes them or other students to feel unsafe.
- ✚ will not bring items that could in any way cause injury.
- ✚ will not bring food to class.
- ✚ will not use electronic devices or cell phones during class. Phones will be collected at the beginning of class but accessible in case of an emergency.

Dress Code

- “Clothing free from inappropriate language or designs including that which is profane; images that depict, advertise or advocate illegal, violent, or lewd conduct; or the unlawful possession or use of weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances; or is discriminatory or derogatory about the body.”

Diocesan Code of Conduct January 1, 2022

- Tight-fitting clothing, halter tops, tank tops, midriff shirts, spaghetti straps, or clothing that may be considered immodest dress should not be worn. Hats must be removed upon entering the building.

General Information

Class Arrival and Departure

Parents are asked to escort their children into the church and not drop them off at the curb. Please do not drop off or leave your child unattended in the parish hall if students are still in the church. All students **MUST** have a parent or guardian come to the classroom to pick up students at the end of class time. Siblings younger than high school age are not permitted to pick up students. **No student should ever be alone in the parking lot.**

Class times

Grades K-5	Tuesday	5:00-6:15 p.m.
Grades 6-8	Wednesday	6:00-7:15 p.m.
Sacrament “Catch Up” Class	Wednesday	6:00-7:15 p.m.

Rosary, Adoration, and Benediction

Ten minutes before class starts, the Rosary will be prayed. While this is not part of class, students are encouraged to come as this presents a wonderful opportunity for them to learn the Rosary.

ALL STUDENTS will take part in Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction for the first 10 minutes of their class. Each class will have assigned seating. Students who arrive late will sit in the last two pews at the back of the church with the Director of Religious Education and will join their class as students leave the church.

After Benediction, the students will report to their classrooms with the catechist. Students will be dismissed from the classrooms at the end of class.

Class Time	Rosary	Adoration/Benediction	Class Ends
Tuesday 5:00	4:50	5:00-5:10	6:15
Wednesday 6:00	5:50	6:00-6:10	7:15

Class Cancellations

Please note that Religious Education Classes follow the Spotsylvania County School closings for inclement weather.

Spotsylvania County Schools Closed
due to inclement weather

Religious Education Classes
Cancelled

Spotsylvania County Schools Virtual
Learning Day due to inclement weather

Religious Education Classes
Cancelled

Spotsylvania County Schools Early
Dismissal due to inclement weather

Religious Education Classes
Cancelled

Spotsylvania County Schools Indoor
Activities cancelled due to inclement
weather

Religious Education Classes
Cancelled

Absences

Faithful attendance of class is vital for a well-grounded understanding of the information provided. Absenteeism also harms the individual student and the morale of the class. In the past, parents of students in the program set a fine example for their children by making class a priority.

Please keep your sick child at home. Students should be fever and symptom free for 24 hours prior to attending Religious Education.

Students who miss five or more of the scheduled classes without making up the work or completing their at-home study may be required to complete remedial work over the summer.

Tardiness

Tardiness can be a serious disruption to the class. There is limited time allotted each week for classes, so please help us by getting your child(ren) to class ON TIME each week. If a student arrives after opening prayers have begun, they will be seated in the back pew with the Director of Religious Education or Assistant. If you arrive late and the classes are still in the church, please bring your child to the church. **Never leave your child alone in the classroom.**

Classroom Discipline

Every student has the right to learn in a classroom where students are well-behaved. Similarly, every catechist and aide has the right to teach in such an environment. Students will exhibit proper behavior and respect authority in the classroom and on the premises.

Each class will use a classroom covenant to maintain consistency throughout the RE program.

Catechists and aides will follow the steps of the classroom covenant:

- Warning- *Remember our covenant.*
- Redirection- *Make a better choice.*
- Reflection- *Pause, think, and reset.*
- Parent Contact- *Home and parish work together to help.*

If a student finds it difficult to exhibit proper behavior, the following course of correction will take place:

- ✠ The catechist will speak to the child privately and encourage a change in behavior.
- ✠ If the disruption persists, the catechist will call upon the Religious Education Director to speak privately with the child in order to integrate the child back into the classroom.
- ✠ If this is unsuccessful, the Religious Education Director will contact the parents and ask them to work with the child.
- ✠ If this attempt is not successful, parents may be required to homeschool for the remainder of the year.

“Under no circumstance may an adult engage in the physical discipline of a minor. It is the policy of the Diocese that corporal punishment of a child is prohibited in all entities under the auspices of the Diocese.

However, this prohibition of corporal punishment shall not be deemed to prohibit

- (i) the use of incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact or other actions designed to maintain order and control;
- (ii) the use of reasonable and necessary force to quell a disturbance or remove a student from the scene of a disturbance that threatens physical injury to persons or damage to property;
- (iii) the use of reasonable and necessary force to prevent a student from inflicting physical harm on himself”

Diocesan Code of Conduct January 1, 2022

In all cases, the parents will be notified of any correction by the catechist or Director of Religious Education.

Learning Disabilities/Health-Related Issues

If your child has a learning disability or health-related issue that would necessitate special consideration while attending Religious Education classes, please notify the Religious Education Office in writing or by entering the information on the Religious Education registration form. All information will remain confidential but may be passed on to the catechist and aide to assist them in teaching your child.

Correspondence

Recognizing that the parents are the primary educators of their children, it is important that catechists communicate with the parents. In accord with the Diocesan Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy, volunteers are not permitted to contact students directly and are not permitted to respond to any phone calls or social media contacts initiated by the student.

If you should need to contact your child's catechist or aide, please direct your communication to the Religious Education Office, and we will promptly pass along your message. If you wish to communicate by email, please send the email to stmatthewre@comast.net and the Religious Education Office will be happy to forward the email.

Health and Safety

Safety Monitor

Each class session will have safety monitors. They will ensure the children's safety from the moment the parents leave them at the front of the church until they are picked up at the classroom door. The safety monitors will be positioned in the parking lot and hallways of the building. They will enforce the following rules:

- No child should ever be alone in the parking lot. *This includes children of catechists.*
- No child should ever be alone in the hallway. Should a child need to use the restroom, the aide should escort the child to the classroom door and ask for assistance from the safety monitor. The safety monitor will walk the child to the restroom door and then escort the child back to the classroom.
- Children will be brought into the church by their parent and not dropped off at the curb.

- Upon class dismissal and pick up at the classroom door, no child will be allowed to leave the building without a parent or guardian. Siblings younger than 9th grade are not considered guardians.
- Entrance and exit from the building will be via the front door only, unless an emergency requires exit by the nearest door.
- The doors to the building will be locked during class times and entry will be permitted by the safety monitors.

Cell Phones

“Use of cell phones is not permitted during youth events. Schools may allow the use of cell phones for educational and emergency purposes only.”

Diocesan Code of Conduct January 1, 2022

To ensure this policy is followed, we ask that all students leave their phones and smart watches at home or with you. If a cell phone/smart watch is brought to class, it will be collected at the beginning of class and placed in a container. This container must be accessible to the students in case of an emergency. Phones and smart watches will be returned to the students at the end of class. Adult volunteers may have their cell phones on their person and use them in case of an emergency.

Safety Standards

The safety and security of our parish children, volunteers, and staff are of the utmost importance. In response to an increase in school shootings and violence, Bishop Burbidge and a security task force composed of pastors, the Superintendent of Schools, principals, teachers, and experienced security professionals revised security standards for schools and parishes with youth gatherings. In addition, the parish clergy and staff met with the Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office for a review of our facilities.

Classroom Locks

All classroom and meeting room doors have locks. Security can be greatly increased by adding locks to all rooms used for classes or youth meetings. All classroom or meeting doors need to shut properly and must have a functioning lock to be easily secured during a lockdown or when not occupied.

Safety Standards for Parishes with Youth Gatherings

Locks on classroom doors

- All doors will remain closed and locked during Religious Education classes.
- Locks will be on the inside of the door allowing the room to be secured during a lockdown.
- The door will open from the inside of the classroom even if the door is locked.
- The DRE or appointed staff will have a key to unlock the door.

Security Cameras

Surveillance cameras are located at all primary entrances to the facility being used by the youth (e.g. parish hall, school gym, etc.).

Surveillance cameras are in all large space areas, such as multipurpose rooms, meeting rooms, the gym, or the parish hall.

Safety Standards for Parishes with Youth Gatherings

- Cameras are in the parish hall entrances, hallways, and classrooms.
- Cameras are not located in the restrooms.
- Cameras record both video and sound.
- Camera footage will be saved for 60 days and then erased.
- The camera surveillance will be housed in a secure room with a limited number of staff authorized to view the footage.

Safety Drills

Fire drills and lockdown drills will be conducted every year per diocesan policy. The DRE will also provide an Active Shooter Plan and walk through the plan with all volunteers.

Health and Well-being

We ask that parents and guardians help us safeguard the health of our students and volunteers.

- Please keep your child home if he or she is feeling ill.
- Your child should be fever free for 24 hours prior to attending class.
- Should your child become ill during class, we will isolate your child and call a parent for pick up. No medication will be administered.
- Should your child have an allergy that requires the administration of an EpiPen, a parent will be asked to remain on church grounds during class

time. If that is not possible, your child may have to be enrolled in our homeschool option.

- Please contact the Religious Education Office when in doubt.

Circle of Grace

This year we will use a Diocesan program called Circle of Grace for our Youth Safe Environment Training for Grades 1-8.

Through *Circle of Grace*, adults assist children and youth to recognize that each of us lives within a Circle of Grace that holds our very essence in body, mind, heart, soul, and sexuality. ***Circle of Grace is not a sex education program, which the Diocese of Arlington reserves to parents.*** Children and youth are taught to identify and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual and sexual boundaries; recognize when boundary violations are about to occur; and demonstrate how to take action when boundaries are threatened or violated. *Circle of Grace* provides a strong parent component in which parents can actively participate in their children's education and formation.

Circle of Grace teaches

- God's presence and assistance in difficult and confusing situations as an essential component in its K-12 curriculum
- A philosophy that can be used throughout the year as a concept that reinforces God's real presence in our lives, respect for ourselves and others, and skills for making good choices.
- The sacredness of each person and how relationships are called to be experiences of divine love
- A holistic approach giving children and youth the skills to identify uncomfortable situations long before inappropriate touch occurs
- Children and youth to identify the "trusted adults" in their lives in addition to their parents

All classes will be taught as presented in the lesson plan with one lesson and taught by the Director of Religious Education on the dates indicated below. Copies of the lesson plans will be included in your parent folder.

First Grade:	October 13th
Second Grade:	October 13th
Third Grade:	October 20th
Fourth Grade:	October 20th
Fifth Grade:	October 27th
Sixth Grade:	October 14th
Seventh Grade:	October 14th
Eighth Grade/Sacrament:	October 21st

Text Series

This year Grades K-5 will use *Word of Life* from Ignatius Press and the Augustine Institute. Sixth and Seventh Grade will continue to use the *Faith and Life* series. Eighth Grade will use a combination of *Chosen* by Ascension Press and Seton Confirmation textbook for Confirmation preparation.

The lesson plans utilize the Ecclesial Method developed by Msgr. Francis Kelly which is a comprehensive catechetical approach that is composed of five steps:

Preparation

This step draws the students away from their daily distractions into a prayerful learning environment.

Proclamation

The Proclamation is a succinct statement of Truth. It is the topic of the lesson that week. The purpose of this step is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Explanation

After the proclamation is made, it needs to be further explained. This step is divided into four focus points. The lesson plan offers many activities and online resources to cover the essential material in the chapter.

Life Application

This step encourages students to apply what they have learned to the daily experiences in their lives.

Celebration

The lesson concludes with a celebration of our thanks and praise to God. This is normally done in the form of a closing prayer, story about a saint, or song.

Word of Life- Grades K-5 Ignatius Press & Augustine Institute

The Word of Life curriculum returns to the heart of the Christian faith: Jesus Christ. Jesus is the “word of life” (1 Jn 1:1). Through an engaging, prayerful, and conversational approach, the Word of Life curriculum equips catechists to bring students into a life-giving encounter with Jesus, the Word of life.

Word of Life Uses Four Golden Catechetical Threads

Salvation History

The curriculum is firmly rooted in Sacred Scripture and the history of salvation. Students will be immersed in the historical reality of God's entering time and inviting all people into communion with Him. They will go beyond simple knowledge of biblical persons, places, and events and will learn how to recognize and live from their place within this amazing narrative.

Christian Anthropology

The Word of Life series teaches students the truth about their identity, dignity, and purpose. Students will learn that it is by living in alignment with God's plan for us that we will find our greatest happiness here on earth and in eternity.

Heroic Virtue and Character Formation

Students will be presented with practical situations and concrete examples of virtuous and holy character. The series draws from the rich tradition of the Church to explain virtue in a way that is accessible enough for young minds so that students can apply it to their lives. Students, parents, and teachers will all come to know ways to recognize virtue and live it in their daily lives.

Learning through Discipleship

Catechesis shows why the faith matters and nurtures a deepening integration of the faith in daily life through Christian discipleship.

Learning Methods Integrated into Word of Life

Word of Life is written intentionally to provide catechists with an effective way of presenting the truths of each chapter. Many methods are incorporated to enhance comprehension for all styles of learners. These methods are integrated within the structure of each chapter.

Conversational Learning

The Parish Catechist Manual provides engaging questions and clarifying statements.

Repetition

Young minds absorb information through repeatedly hearing, seeing, and doing. The Word of Life series gives several opportunities throughout a chapter for repetition of key phrases and Scripture passages.

Memorization

The Word of Life series provides short phrases (Proclamation) and Scripture verses that can be memorized.

Routine

The ecclesial method provides a routine and structure for students. Knowing what to expect and what is expected of them allows children to feel more confident.

Hands-On Learning

The series is filled with opportunities to integrate hands-on learning through chapter activities and bonus activities.

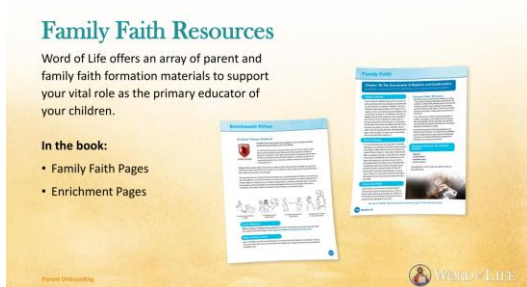
Real-World Practice

Word of Life incorporates age-appropriate activities to help students learn reverent behavior, silent prayer, and the practice of virtue.

Reading Comprehension Level

Care has been taken to ensure that all Student Text lessons have been written at appropriate reading levels according to common educational industry standards.

Student Text:



The Word of Life Student Text makes learning the faith effective, engaging, and fun with Bible stories, contemporary children's stories, lives of the saints, and activities for a variety of learning styles. The text consists of core lessons, as well as four liturgical season lessons. Images used in each chapter range from photographs depicting a real-life situation, contemporary art depicting a Bible narrative, and sacred art that depicts an event in salvation history.

Family Faith Pages:

Word of Life provides family discussion on the content of the faith, including simple discussion questions (and answers) to spark conversation at home about what the students learned in school (a chapter summary is also included); suggestions for life application in the family (including virtuous living); and family prayer and family activities

to practice the Catholic faith at home. A list of vocabulary words for students to review is also included; digital flash cards can be found on the parent portal. These perforated pages are found at the end of each chapter in the Student Text and should be taken home after completion of each chapter. They are also on the parent portal.

Online Resources through the Parent Portal:



The Word of Life parent portal provides built-in parent and family faith formation that supports parents in their important role as the primary catechists of their children. Using both print and electronic media resources, Word of Life engages and enriches parents at varying levels of interest, knowledge, and formation. This portal gives access to the student videos, ideas for celebrating the

liturgical calendar at home, explanations of the sacred art found in the Student Text, and links to other important Catholic resources.

Faith and Life-Grade 6-7 Ignatius Press

The Student Text has many helpful aids:

- ✚ Scripture passages- each chapter opens with Sacred Scripture
- ✚ Catechism questions-each chapter closes with questions and answers from the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- ✚ Vocabulary words for each chapter in bold type with the definitions in the glossary at the end of the book
- ✚ Prayers are in the back of the book on the blue pages
- ✚ Beautiful artwork

Chosen- Grade 8 Ascension Press

Chosen: Your Journey to Confirmation has been written to present the Catholic Faith to teens in a way that keeps their attention as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It's carefully designed methodology features highly effective and engaging material conveyed through videos, student workbooks, and classroom experience. Filmed in over fifty locations in the United States and around the world, *Chosen* features fourteen of the top youth experts in the Church today.

Curriculum

The objective of our Religious Education Curriculum is to engage the children in a program of catechetical formation which

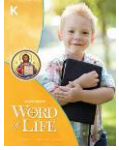
- provides a firm intellectual foundation and an opportunity for understanding and remembering the basic teachings of our Catholic Faith.
- firmly and clearly forms in minds and hearts a deep sense of the loving covenantal relationship with God established by Jesus Christ in and through His Church and Sacraments.

The Religious Education Program Curriculum follows the four-part arrangement used in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

- The Creed
- The Liturgy and the Seven Sacraments
- Faith and Morals
- Christian Prayer

Prayers by Grade Level

Grade	Prayers
K	Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and know how to genuflect
1	Previous Grade requirements plus Guardian Angel Prayer
2	Previous Grade requirements plus Act of Contrition
3	Previous Grade requirements plus Apostles' Creed
4	Previous Grade requirements plus Act of Faith and Hail Holy Queen
5	Previous Grade requirements plus Act of Hope and Saint Michael Prayer
6	Previous Grade requirements plus Act of Love
7	Previous Grade requirements plus Come Holy Spirit Prayer
8	Previous Grade requirements plus Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit



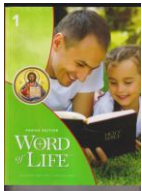
Grade K: God's Plan of Love

Theme

Kindergarten introduces God's plan of love as expressed in Scripture. It provides a groundwork for understanding the dignity of the human person and prepares your child for a deeper understanding of the faith in later grades.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-3	God Loves Me
2	4-6	God Created Us Out of Love
3	7-12	God Keeps His Promises
4	13-16	The Life of Jesus, Our Savior
5	17-19	Jesus Saves Us
6	20-22	God Gives Us the Church



Grade 1: God's Promise of a Savior

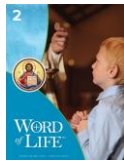
Theme

Grade 1 establishes the overarching narrative of salvation history, and students come to understand that this history is our history as God's people. God's immense love for His children is revealed. Students will learn the great lengths God has gone to in order to share His Life and love with us culminating in the coming of Jesus to save us from sin and establish the Church.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-5	God Loves Us and Created Us

2	6-11	Preparing for the Savior
3	12-15	Jesus, Our Savior, Has Come
4	16-17	Jesus Saves Us from Our Sins
5	18-22	We Share in Jesus' Life



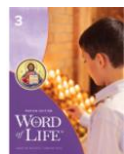
Grade 2: Salvation History: God's Presence in the Sacraments

Theme

Grade 2 prepares students to receive their First Penance and First Holy Communion in light of salvation history. They will see that Christ fulfilled the Old Testament and instituted the sacraments so they can be virtuous and holy. Students will be encouraged to develop their own character by making virtuous choices and by receiving God's grace in the sacraments.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-3	The Need for a Savior
2	4-6	God's Loving Plan to Save Us
3	7-9	God's Plan Fulfilled through Jesus
4	10-14	Jesus Saves Us from Our Sins
5	15-23	Jesus Gives Himself to Us in the Eucharist



Grade 3: The Holy Spirit and the Life of Grace

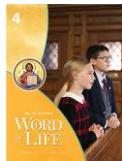
Theme

Grade 3 presents to the students God's plan to be in communion with His people. Throughout all of salvation history, God has mercifully gathered His people to Himself.

The chapters invite students to accept God’s invitation to communion, true happiness here on earth, and perfect happiness with God in Heaven.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-4	Created for Communion
2	5-7	The Communion of Love is Broken
3	8-9	Jesus Repairs the Communion of Love
4	10-15	We Receive God’s Grace
5	16	At Mass, We Worship God
6	17-20	Our Life in Christ
7	21-22	Our Mission in Christ



Grade 4: The Creed: Truth and Our Response of Faith

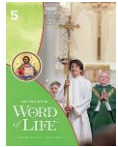
Theme

Grade 4 presents to the students the truths revealed by God and professed in the Creeds of the Catholic Church. The Creeds provide a “common language of faith” for Christians (CCC 185). The students will study these truths and develop a personal understanding of this language of faith.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-4	We Believe: United in Faith and Truth
2	5-8	I Believe in God
3	9-14	I Believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God
4	15-19	I Believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy

		Catholic Church
5	20-22	I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins and Life Everlasting



Grade 5: Liturgy and Worship

Theme

In Grade 5, The students will explore the beauty and meaning of the Catholic Church's worship of God. They will study the life of Christ according to the Gospels and see how Jesus fulfilled and perfected the worship of God in the Old Testament. Jesus instituted the sacraments and sent the Holy Spirit to give us the grace we need to worship God in perfect charity and justice.

Sequence

Unit	Chapters	
1	1-2	God's Works, and in Charity and Justice We Respond
2	3-6	God Became Man
3	7-11	Through Jesus, God's People Are Born from Water and the Spirit
4	12-16	Through Jesus, We Can Worship in Spirit and in Truth
5	17-22	Jesus' Paschal Mystery Fulfills God's Work of Salvation



Grade 6: Following Christ

Theme

The blueprint for a life of love: the law of God, especially in the Ten Commandments, and the presence of Jesus in the Holy Mass. The interaction of the challenges of God's law and his gifts of grace that help us fulfill his law.

Sequence

- *Part 1:* The Ten Commandments- Forming the conscience and increasing closeness to God
- *Part 2:* The Holy Mass- An emphasis on the Real Presence, Christ's sacrifice, and an explanation of the parts of the Mass
- *Part 3:* The Last Things- Death and God's judgment of us, with an emphasis on the great happiness of Heaven

Aim

To help sixth grade students learn to love the moral law as Christ did, to cherish and love the Mass as our best prayer to God, and especially to revere and adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament



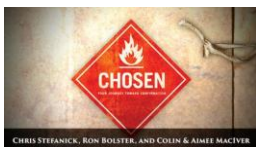
Grade 7: The Life of Grace

Theme

Grace as our link with God, his gift which brings us to himself and his eternal life, with an emphasis on transmission of grace through the seven sacraments; God's loving revelation of himself through the prophets, the Incarnation, and the Church; the role of grace in developing the virtues.

Sequence

- *Part 1:* God Reveals Himself- The revelation of God through creation, and the prophets, and to the chosen people
- *Part 2:* God becomes Man- Jesus, true God and true Man, Priest and Sacrificial Victim
- *Part 3:* God Shares His Life- The operation of grace in our lives, in developing the virtues, especially through each sacrament



Grade 8: Chosen

Overview

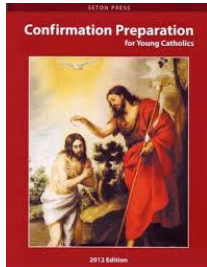
Chosen for Confirmation candidates provides the essential intellectual and spiritual catechesis vital to sacrament preparation. The goal of this program is to bring about a personal experience with Jesus Christ. Each of the lessons invite the candidate to hear and then respond with faith to the voice of God. From creation all the way through salvation history, candidates will discover how the sacraments, prayer, and discipleship are the keys to a happy life.

Sequence

- *Part 1:* The Church- Christ's plan for the Church's structure and its necessary

attributes; the Church's teaching authority

- *Part 2: The Christian in the World- Religious and laity, Holy Orders, Marriage, and family life; call to holiness*
- *Part 3: Sacrament of Confirmation and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit- Review the matter, form, and effect of the sacrament*



This textbook from *Seton Press* teaches Confirmation utilizing the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It contains chapter review questions, and the last chapter has prayers in preparation for Confirmation and basic prayers of our Faith.

A Parent's Prayer

*Loving God,
You are the giver of all we possess,
the source of all of our blessings.
We thank and praise you.*

*Thank you for the gift of our children.
May our children come to know you, the one true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*May your Holy Spirit help them to grow
in faith, hope, and love,
so they may know peace, truth, and goodness.*

*May their ears hear your voice.
May their eyes see your presence in all things.
May their lips proclaim your word.
May their hearts be your dwelling place.
May their hands do works of charity.
May their feet walk in the way of Jesus Christ,
your Son and our Lord.
Amen.*

Loyola Press