

Diocese of Colorado Springs

Essential Curriculum Expectations

For

Religious Education

Sixth Grade

Introduction to Grades 6 – 8

The material covered at the middle school level presumes an understanding by the student of the material covered in a K – 5th grade religious education program and the reception of the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. It is very important that a review of Basic Beliefs of the Faith be done at the beginning of each school year to make sure everyone is on the same page. Attention needs to be given to those students who may not have sufficiently grasped the elementary concepts taught so that they are able to absorb the new material now presented.

This level begins a new phase in the catechesis of our children. It deepens to a more mature level the essential truths they have already been exposed to. While it continues to help the student know their faith, it seeks to help them understand and recognize how their faith connects to their everyday life.

I. Creed – Profession of Faith

This section deals with what God, Our Heavenly Father, has revealed about Himself and His plan for our salvation. This has been revealed through Jesus Christ, His Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The delivery of the Faith begins with the fact that God acted first – He has given us everything for no other reason than that He loves us.

At the end of the school year, Sixth Graders should:

- Know that the Blessed Trinity is the central mystery of our faith and is the mystery of God Himself and that we could never have known this unless God revealed it to us ccc 234, 249, 261
- Know that only God can create; that is, bring something to being out of nothing ccc 290, 296-97
- Know that God immediately creates every human soul for eternal life and that every human being has a personal and unique dignity ccc 356-57, 366, 382
- Know that God created the world good and that man, through disobedience, brought sin and death into the world. By His obedience, Jesus Christ, the new Adam, restores life to the world. He is the son of Mary, the new Eve. ccc 385, 402, 410-11, 421

- Understand that “Christ” means “Anointed One.” The Father anointed His Son with the Holy Spirit; thus Jesus became priest, prophet and king. ccc 436, 438, 453
- Know that the Holy Spirit was sent by God the Father and God the Son to dwell within us and help us to choose what is good and to avoid what is evil ccc 245, 733 -36
- Know that Jesus Christ is true God and true man ccc 480
- Know that Mary is the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church ccc 509, 963
- Know that Mary is our model of faith in giving her “yes” at the Annunciation ccc 494, 511
- Know that Christ is the principle of our resurrection, both now by baptism and in the future in heaven ccc 655, 658
- Know that Jesus bestowed on Peter a special authority over His Church ccc 552-53
- Understand that the Kingdom of God is already present in the Church which is the beginning and seed of this Kingdom on Earth. It will come to pass through a final triumph of God over evil ccc 669-680
- Understand that the Church is the sign and instrument of God’s communion with all humanity, gathering together people of every land and tongue ccc 776, 780
- Know that the Church has four marks: she is one, holy, catholic and apostolic ccc 811, 813-869
- Understand that a diversity of ministry exists in the Church, including clergy, laity and religious, all contributing to the Church’s one mission ccc 871-873
- Know that the Communion of Saints includes the Church on earth, those being purified in Purgatory and the blessed already in heaven ccc 954,962
- Know that Catholics believe that those who die in God’s friendship, but not yet completely sinless, are purified in Purgatory before entering heaven and that we pray for the souls in Purgatory ccc 1030-32, 1054-55

II. Sacraments – Celebration of the Christian Mystery

This section deals with the way God, Our Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, His Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit continues to make Himself

and His plan for our salvation present today. In the sacraments God touches us and we touch Him. This touch changes us in that we are freed from sin and become His children. God has given us everything simply because He loves us. The reception of the sacraments is one way we say “yes” to God.

At the end of the school year Sixth Graders should:

- Know that the Paschal Mystery refers to Christ’s suffering, death, resurrection and ascension, which we celebrate at every Mass ccc 1067
- Understand that during the liturgy our earthly worship is united with the heavenly worship. The people on earth join the saints and angels in worshiping God. ccc 1084-90
- Understand that through the Liturgical year we celebrate the life and history of the Church and honor Mary and the saints ccc 1171-73
- Be very familiar with the celebration of the Mass and be encouraged to participate in the liturgy as servers, greeters, choir members and proclaimers of the Word.
- Be very familiar with all of the Sacraments and encouraged to receive Holy Communion and Reconciliation as often as possible.
- Understand that holiness comes from the gift of grace we receive from God in the Sacraments ccc 2012-15
- Understand that Sacramentals are signs that signify spiritual effects that we receive through the Church, but they do not give grace in the way Sacraments do ccc 1667, 1670, 1677
- Know the six Holy Days of Obligation that are observed in the United States and the significance of each day:
 1. The Ascension (40 days after Easter)
 2. The Assumption (August 15th)
 3. All Saint’s Day (November 1st)
 4. The Immaculate Conception (December 8th)
 5. Christmas Day (December 25th)
 6. Mary, Mother of God (January 1st)

III. Moral Development – Life in Christ

This section deals with our response to God’s love for us. As His children, we want to live as Jesus taught us.

At the end of the school year, Sixth Graders should:

- Know that the Old Testament prophets preached God's justice and mercy and spoke of a savior who was to come ccc1286
- Know that the Old Testament experiences of faithfulness, sin, conversion and reconciliation reflect the Christian moral life today ccc 1962
- Know that sin is any intentional thought, word, deed or omission that breaks our relationship with God.
- Know that venial sins do not destroy the life of grace in our soul, but that mortal sins do ccc 1855, 1861-63
- Know that there are three conditions for a mortal sin:
 1. that the matter is serious
 2. that you know the sin is serious
 3. you freely choose it anyway ccc 1857-59
- Know that the occasions of sin are any person, place or thing that may easily lead us to sin ccc 1853
- Know that many aspects of popular culture, such as magazines, video games, television shows, music and certain websites, etc. are contrary to the teachings of Christ and that they are occasions of sin ccc 909
- Know that habits of selfishness and moral weakness lead to sin and that the remedy is the pursuit of virtue ccc 1849
- Know that we are to be chaste and pure in thoughts, words and actions, both with self and with others ccc 2518
- Know that conversion is turning away from sin and toward a life in Christ ccc 1439
- Know that ultimately, God and His goodness will always prevail over sin and evil ccc 1432
- Show respect by our words and actions for life and the basic human rights of all people ccc 361
- Show respect and obedience for those in legitimate authority ccc 2234, 2239
- Participate in safe, age-appropriate community service activities that support life issues and care for the environment.
- Recognize the dignity of all people, especially those most vulnerable in society, e.g. the unborn, the elderly, the poor, the homeless, the disabled, the mentally ill, the sick, etc.
- Know that we are called to love everyone, forgive all who have offended us and pray for the salvation of all ccc 2258

- Recognize that personal sin and selfishness are the cause of local, national and global injustice ccc 1869

IV. Prayer Life

This section deals with another way we respond to God. As His children we must get to know Him better and spend time talking with and listening to Him. We learn about God by reading the Bible and prayer is essential for growing as a child of God.

At the end of the school year, Sixth Graders should:

- Know that the Mass is our greatest prayer and that we need to participate at Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation ccc 1167, 2043, 2180-82
- Understand the importance of perseverance in prayer to overcome difficulties ccc 2725-45
- Know that the Psalms, rooted in Judaism, were prayed by Christ and are used today as personal and communal prayer ccc 2585-89, 2596
- Know how to participate in different kinds of prayers and devotions ccc 1674
- Know that God's plan for our redemption is revealed through Salvation history. Salvation history begins with Adam and Eve and throughout the rest of the Old Testament, God prepares humans for a Savior. God's saving plan is fulfilled in Jesus Christ and carried out through the Church today ccc 430-31, 436, 1103-07
- Know that the creation stories in Genesis are not intended to teach scientific fact, but the truth about man's origins – God is the Creator of everything ccc 282-89
- Know that as a Jewish boy, Jesus read, studied and prayed the Old Testament ccc 527-34
- Know that the Old Testament helps us to understand Jesus and His promises as well as to understand our Christian roots are found in Judaism ccc 128-29, 1094-96
- Be familiar with the types of books that make up the Old Testament: the Law, the Historical Books, the Wisdom Books and the Prophetic Books ccc 2056-61, 120
- Know that a covenant is a sacred agreement God makes with us and to which He is always faithful. Old Testament covenants were made with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses and David. The New

Covenant is in Christ and we enter into it through Baptism ccc 72, 992, 357, 56-58, 1219, 1223, 2810, 2564-65

- Be familiar with some of the principal Old Testament Scripture passages that speak of the Messiah ccc 410, 702, 711-716
- Be able to identify some of the principal Old Testament prophets – Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel ccc 64, 201, 522
- Know that the Jewish people celebrate Passover to remember the night when their houses were “passed over” by the Angel of Death and then freed from Egyptian slavery ccc 1093, 1363, 1334, 130
- Know that Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples the night before He died and gave it new meaning. Jesus is the new Passover Lamb whose sacrifice saved the world and freed us from sin and death ccc 1096, 1225, 1340, 1362-66, 1449, 1680-83
- Know that Jesus fulfills all the Old Testament promises ccc 652.