

**Diocese of Colorado Springs**  
**Essential Curriculum Expectations**  
**For**  
**Religious Education**  
**Seventh 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 – 5<sup>th</sup> 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, Seventh 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 the Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity are distinct, but not separate ccc 253-254
- Know that each of the three Persons of the Trinity are equal and that each of the always was, is now and always will be God ccc 255
- Know that the Incarnation is the mystery of God the Son in the Flesh. This is Jesus who from the moment of His conception became man and always will be true God and true man ccc 464, 469  
(Note: Prior to the Incarnation, God the Son was strictly God, not man. From the moment of the Incarnation – at the Annunciation – and into eternity, Jesus is true God and true man.)

- Know the four reasons for the Incarnation:
  - a. So that we could be saved from sin and death
  - b. So that God's love for us could be revealed
  - c. So that we would have a Supreme model of holiness
  - d. To make us partakers in the Divine nature  
ccc 457-60
- Know that the Paschal Mystery is the Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus ccc 1067
- Know that through our Baptism, we are called and sent forth to continue Jesus' work in the world ccc 1267-1270
- Know that Jesus made Peter His vicar on earth. Peter was the head of the apostles and unifier of the Church. Ccc 552, 882
- Know that each Pope is the successor of Peter, the head of the apostles. Every bishop is a successor to one of the apostles. The pope is the head and unifier of the bishops and the Church ccc 882, 1461
- Know that faith is both a gift from God and a personal response to God ccc 153, 166
- Know that faith is a God-given virtue that empowers us to believe in God and all that He teaches ccc 1814
- Know that at the time of our death we will be judged by God according to our deeds and adherence to God's Law ccc 1021-22
- Know that all who die in the state of grace go heaven either immediately or after a time of cleansing in purgatory ccc 1030-32
- Know that those who die in the state of un-repentant mortal sin go to hell ccc 1033-37
- Know that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was a Virgin throughout her entire life ccc 510
- Know that the faithful who died for the Faith are called martyrs and that they are in heaven with God and all the blessed ccc 2473, 2506
- Know that human life is changed at death but not ended and that our bodies will rise again ccc 1016
- Know that the Church – made up of the people of God – is the Mystical Body of Christ. Christ is the Head and we, the baptized are the members of His Mystical Body , the Church ccc 781-82, 779

## **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, Seventh Graders should:

- Know that the Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, and is at the center of our Catholic faith and worship ccc 1074, 1324, 1374, 1413
- Know that during the Penitential Rite at Mass, we acknowledge our sins and ask for God’s Mercy
- Know that the Lectionary is the official book of Scripture readings, arranged in a three-year cycle and used during the Liturgy of the Word ccc 1154
- Know how to participate actively and reverently in the celebration of the Mass through proper gestures, responses and songs ccc 1348
- Know that the Mass of Christian Burial celebrates the triumph of Christ over sin and death ccc 1684-1686
- Know that anyone who desires to receive Holy Communion must be in a state of grace. Anyone who is aware of having committed mortal sin must receive absolution in the Sacrament of Penance before they receive communion ccc 1415
- Know that we are to fast from food and drink for at least one hour prior to the reception of Holy Communion ccc 1387, Can. 919 of the *Code of Canon Law*
- Know that in the sacrament of Holy Orders, the three degrees of ordination are: deacon, priest and bishop ccc 1536
- Know that the sacraments are sacred mysteries through which Jesus continues to care for us.
- Know that the liturgical year begins with the First Sunday of Advent and ends with the Solemnity of Christ the King.

### **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, Seventh Graders should:

- Know that God made us to know, love and serve Him and to be with Him in heaven ccc 1721
- Know that Jesus is truly God and truly man ccc 461
- Know that we are made in God's image and likeness with intellect and will and that God wants us, but does not force us, to live in communion with Him ccc 1934
- Know that as a man, Jesus became like us in all ways except sin ccc 470
- Know that sin is an intentional thought, word, deed or omission that breaks God's law.
- Know that sanctifying grace is how we share in God's life and it is what makes us holy ccc 2023-2024
- Know that we should respect others and ourselves because we are made in the image and likeness of God ccc 1934
- Know that good moral decision-making, which is based on God's law and the teachings of the Church, is possible with the help of God's grace ccc 2030
- Know the definition of the theological virtues - faith, hope & charity and the cardinal virtues – prudence, justice, temperance & fortitude ccc 1834-44
- Understand that Christ's invitation to "...take up your cross and follow Me." Demands keeping the commandments, living the beatitudes and offering up our sufferings in union with Jesus' sufferings on the cross ccc 2015
- Know that the Church has the authority to provide moral teaching and direction through the Magisterium. The Magisterium is the Pope and the bishops in communion with him ccc 2050
- Know how to examine their consciences based on the Ten Commandments ccc 2068

- Know that sexuality is a gift and that its expression is reserved for a husband and wife in marriage for the purpose of strengthening the bond of marital love between them and to have children ccc 2363
- Know that we should imitate the loving and humble service of the Blessed Virgin Mary ccc 967
- Be familiar with the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy and how they are examples of putting faith into action.
- Know that we are called to live responsibly as stewards of God's creation, respecting life – especially human life – ourselves and the environment by willingly sharing our time and God-given gifts with the community.
- Know that we are called to work together with others for peace and justice through service projects.

#### **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, Seventh Graders should:

- Understand the importance of weekly participation in the Sunday Mass as the foundation of Catholic life, prayer and spirituality ccc 2174-83
- Know the parts of the Mass and all prayer responses, so as to be able to participate in the Mass more fully.
- Know how to participate in Eucharistic Adoration, Benediction and know how to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament ccc 1378-79
- Understand the Church's Advent tradition of waiting and longing for the coming of the Lord ccc 524
- Understand the Church's Lenten traditions of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in preparation for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery ccc 540, 1095, 1438
- Be familiar with the Beatitudes and understand them as a pattern for the Christian way of life ccc 1716
- Be able to participate in different kinds of prayers and devotions such as the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Divine Mercy Chaplet, etc.

- Pray daily, especially for the protection of all human life from conception to natural death ccc 2258-62
- Know that Sacred Scripture teaches without error God’s saving truth ccc 81, 101, 102
- Know that “Gospel” means “Good News.” The Gospels are four true accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus ccc 125-27
- Know that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are similar and are called the synoptic gospels, while the Gospel of John has a different, more reflective style and contains some additional stories. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the four Evangelists.
- Know that while the Gospels are different, they are all true and all have the same message: Jesus is the Messiah, Son of God, who came to teach us, died to save us and opened Heaven to us.
- Know that Jesus’ whole life and ministry took place in the area of Palestine and be familiar with the important sites mentioned in the Gospels such as, Nazareth, Galilee, Jerusalem, etc. ccc 487-507, 525-30, 616-17, 624-30
- Know that prayerful Scripture reading, especially of the New Testament, can be of great help in our efforts to live faithful Christian lives ccc 131-33, 115-17
- Know the basic elements of Salvation History:
  - a. God the Father’s love for us is manifested in the good of creation cc 279, 287, 290-95
  - b. We were separated from God by sin ccc 385-89, 402-09
  - c. Jesus is the bridge back to the Father ccc 410-12, 422-24
  - d. Following Jesus’ teachings and participating in the sacraments he gave us will lead us to heaven ccc 430-35, 456-60