

Second Grade

Diocese of Madison Catechetical Standards



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Introduction

Thank you for answering the call of God to be a teacher of the Faith, which involves leading children closer to Christ! Catechesis is the art of teaching the Faith in order to facilitate a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. The teaching should lead to understanding who Christ is in light of God’s word (what He has revealed to us in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition) in order to be changed through His grace and become more and more like Him. Transformed by the working of grace, “*the Christian thus sets himself to follow Christ and learns more and more within the Church to think like Him, to judge like Him, to act in conformity with His commandments, and to hope as He invites us to*” (*On Catechesis in Our Time*, Bl. John Paul II, 20. Hereafter CT). “*The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: 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*” (CT, 5).

How are catechists to teach in a way that leads children and young people into communion with Jesus Christ?

1. Holiness of life is essential in order for the catechist’s teaching to bring others into intimacy with Jesus Christ. Catechists must first and foremost be witnesses. “*Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses*” (Pope Paul VI, EN, 41). Thus, a parish or school catechist must first be a practicing Catholic, that is, “*a Catholic in good standing who participates fully in the worship and life of the Church, and who understands and accepts the teachings of the Church and moral demands of the Gospel, as articulated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church*” (*Standards For Educators in Catholic Parishes and Schools*, Wisconsin Catholic Conference, 2008, 3). They must also be “*prepared for their apostolate by appropriate catechetical training* (Diocesan Certification) and their spiritual life should be characterized by a “*love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and of Christ’s Church, our Holy Father, and God’s holy people,*” a personal prayer life, missionary zeal, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (See *The National Directory for Catechesis*, pp. 228-229, 231).
2. An overview of Salvation History is to be presented at the beginning of each grade. Each and every teaching of the Faith that follows should be presented in light of this Story of God’s Plan for us (*The General Directory for Catechesis*, 128. Hereafter, GDC). This gives students the context for all the content of our catechesis.
3. The doctrinal content of our standards and thus our overall catechesis is found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which is the “*sure norm for teaching the Faith*” (GDC, 121). All Catholic School administrators, teachers, DRE’s, CRE’s, catechists and Youth Ministers should regularly utilize the *Catechism* when teaching the Faith (GDC, 121).
4. The generous utilization of Sacred Scripture should have a pre-eminent position in all of our catechesis. The students need to know that the teachings of the Church flow from Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition which together constitute the “*supreme rule of faith*” (*Dei Verbum*, 21). When the word of God is spoken, grace is given, and students authentically encounter Jesus Christ. While forming our children in the Catholic faith is an honor and a privilege, we must also acknowledge that this task cannot be accomplished solely through the dedicated efforts of parish priests, catechists, and Catholic school teachers, but resides most importantly in the amount of time and effort parents devote to learning and practicing the faith at home.

Catechetical standards and benchmarks identify the expectations for the formation of Catholic youth and include specific grade level competencies that every youth should know and be able to demonstrate. They are intended to strengthen the partnership between the primary educators of children—the parents—and the supporting educators of children—Catholic parish and school personnel. These standards and benchmarks will assist parents and catechists to work together toward these learning competencies and the creative developing of different curriculum to ensure successful catechesis and thus, most naturally, a deeper *communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ* the Savior of the World.

2nd Grade

Characteristics of a 2nd grade child

- ◇ Are beginning to develop a set of actions and patterns based on those whom they love and admire in their lives-choosing to imitate adult influences
- ◇ Have an interest in how things are made/work
- ◇ Are reaching the age of reason and are cognizant of “right” and “wrong” and the freedom they have to choose between the two
- ◇ Their attention span is slowly growing to a 15-20 minute attention span (depending on the task and the abstract thinking that is involved)
- ◇ Abstract learning is developing, but concrete examples and learning are still the best way to educate at this level
- ◇ Memorization and questions are a positive way to learn at this age: Prayers and Scripture
- ◇ Routine and habits help them to achieve independence which in turn helps to build self esteem
- ◇ Appreciates family situations and social networks (church, scouts etc) and rituals
- ◇ Are capable of working in a group and are developing social circles and closer individual friendships (may pair off with friends whom they prefer)

Faith/Moral Characteristics & Needs

- ◇ Show an interest in God’s greatness and beauty
- ◇ Appreciates identity as a member of a group and/or family, yet recognizes uniqueness of individuals within the group
- ◇ Can identify situations in which another may need help and takes responsibility to offer help
- ◇ Needs opportunity to offer their gifts and talents; to know they are needed in some capacity
- ◇ Need freedom to make choices and need help to realize what the effects of the different choices may be
- ◇ Need to be taught that faith is our response to God. He gives himself to us and we make a choice to respond in faith
- ◇ Children should be taught to be “good” out of love for God and not out of fear of punishment
- ◇ Need to hear what Christ taught and see what he did in order to make a choice to follow and live as he lived (Lives of the saints as examples)
- ◇ Consciences can be formed in 7 year olds by charitable yet firm discipline
- ◇ Are capable of giving and receiving mercy to/from another person and also from God
- ◇ Need to be taught the value of prayer, not just as talking to God or asking him for something but rather as an opportunity to deepen our relationship with him/to be with him

- ◇ Need to experience aspects of the faith by listening and thinking and also by imitating and doing
- ◇ Need to understand and handle constructively their feelings and emotions.

Catechetical Implications

- ◇ As a prime role model for the Children, the teacher of the faith needs to have a strong relationship with God through prayer and active involvement with a faith community.
- ◇ As they learn to imitate adults, the adult faith influences in their lives must be very deliberate in what they choose to model
- ◇ Need help and demonstration in the development of the examination of Conscience (may have trouble with things in the recent and the long time past)
- ◇ Catechists must be practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church

God's Plan of Salvation History

It is very important that before you dive into the curriculum and the catechetical standards that the year be introduced by the Story. The context of the Story of salvation History will provide the proper foundation for the rest of your catechetical instruction. The Story can be taught as a one day lesson, or a week long lesson. Each teacher must make a determination of how long they will take to present the Story to their students. Work in the Textbook should not begin until your students have their story-God's story of Salvation History. An overview of God's Plan of Salvation History is to be presented at the beginning of each year. Please make the presentation appropriate to the grade level.

1. God is a communion of Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The three Persons in one God is the Blessed Trinity. God has no beginning and no end. (CCC 234, 232, 237)
2. God is our Father Who loves us and cares for us. God created each person to be united with Him. (CCC 426, 301, 759, 305, 375, 2014)
3. God created everything out of nothing. (CCC 296-298, 338)
4. God created angels as spiritual beings. Angels are God's messengers. We all have our own personal guardian angel. Our guardian angel keeps constant, watchful care over us and guides us and protects us on our journey to God in Heaven. (CCC 328-329, 331-333, 336)
5. All of the angels were put to a test to see if they would be faithful to God. Lucifer and some of the angels completely rejected God and they became Satan and his demons. (Revelation 12:7-9) (CCC 391-395)
6. God created Adam and Eve in His image and likeness. He created Adam and Eve and the whole human race to know, love and serve Him so that we can be united with Him both here and forever in Heaven. Adam and Eve were united fully with God through sanctifying grace within their souls, a participation in God's Divine Life. (CCC, 362-366, 356-357, 374-376, 1934)
7. Adam and Eve were put to a test to see if they would be faithful to God. Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan and they disobeyed God. The first sin of Adam and Eve (the Original Sin) separated them from God. They and all their descendants lost the union with God that they had been created for. They no longer had sanctifying grace within their souls. (CCC 396-400, 402-406, 418)
8. God alone could fix the problem of sin and reunite mankind with Himself. Thankfully, God promised a Savior (Genesis 3:15). Only the Savior could bring us back to the purpose for which we were created being united with God (communion with God). In the Old Testament, God began to form His people through Abraham. Moses was given the Law so that the people knew how to live in order to be faithful to the one true God. The Israelites could not be faithful to the God's Law because they did not have sanctifying grace, a share in God's life, to strengthen them. The prophets told the people to prepare for the Messiah, Who would bring about a salvation which would include all the nations. Through the Savior, God would keep His promise to reunite us with Himself as adopted children. (CCC 410-412, 420-421, 54-64, 2570-2589)
9. Jesus is God. Jesus was born as man on the first Christmas as our Savior. This is called the Incarnation. (CCC 464, 461, 463, 443-445)
10. Mary's "yes" to God to be the Mother of Jesus made our salvation possible. Since Mary is the Mother of Jesus and Jesus is God, we rightly call Mary the Mother of God. (CCC 494-495, 497, 509, 485, 723)

- 11.** Jesus began the foundation of the Church by preaching the Good News, instituting the seven sacraments and establishing the Church with a structure. The structure consisted of the twelve Apostles with Peter as the head. (CCC 763-766, 759, 1114)
- 12.** Jesus suffered, died on the cross and rose on Easter Sunday. Jesus did this to save us from the power of sin and death and to reunite us with Himself. (CCC 612, 616, 619, 629, 639-640, 654)
- 13.** The Church was born from the flow of blood and water from the open side of the crucified Christ: the water of Baptism and the Blood of the Eucharist. (CCC 766)
- 14.** Christ's work of redemption was accomplished primarily by His Suffering, Death, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. These four events are called the Paschal Mystery. (CCC 1067)
- 15.** Forty days after the Resurrection Jesus ascended to His Father, which we celebrate on the Ascension. Ten days later, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost to remain with us until the end of time. (CCC 665, 731-732, 233)
- 16.** At Pentecost the Holy Spirit strengthened the Apostles to imitate Christ. The Holy Spirit empowered them to administer the Sacraments, to teach what Jesus had taught them and to lead the Church. Pentecost is when we celebrate the public manifestation of the Catholic Church. (CCC 767, 747, 771-773, 1585, 780, 1076)
- 17.** This was the first time that mankind received sanctifying grace, a participation in God's Divine Life, since the original sin of Adam and Eve. We are only able to live the Christian life with the aid of supernatural grace received through the Church by the Sacraments and from actual grace through a life of daily prayer. (CCC 1226-1228, 1265-1266, 747, 1996-2000)
- 18.** Jesus will come again in glory with the Kingdom of God in its fullness. He will judge the living and the dead and those who have chosen to follow Jesus will reign forever with Him. He will bring His Family into full union with Him and put an end to suffering and death forever. (CCC 1040, 1042-1045)

Creed – Profession of Faith

Section One: the Creed pertains to what God, our heavenly Father has revealed about Himself and His Plan for our Salvation (saving us from Sin) and sanctification (making us Holy) through Jesus Christ His Son by the Power of the Holy Spirit. God has acted first. Faith is our response to what God has revealed. These Truths are gathered together in the Creed.

Catholic school/parish catechetical students in the Diocese of Madison will know and understand the fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ in His Church, according to the articles of our Profession of Faith.

A. Understand revelation as God’s action to make Himself known in creation, in his relationship with Israel, and in the Person of Jesus Christ.

1. Know and retell the Story of Salvation History
2. Connect how the goodness of creation reflects the perfect truth, goodness, and beauty of the creator. (CCC 41)
3. Explain why and give examples of how God speaks to us and tells us about himself. He does this so that we can know and love him (CCC 50, 52)

B. Understand Faith as an assent to God who reveals Himself.

Not at this level.

C. Understand Sacred Scripture as witness to God’s Self-Revelation.

1. Retell and explain the Bible stories of:
 - a. Jesus instituting the sacrament of Baptism (Mk 28: 16-20) (CCC 2)
 - b. Jesus instituting the sacrament of Holy Eucharist (Lk. 22:14-20, Mt. 26: 26-29, Mk 14:22-25) (CCC 1323)
 - c. Jesus instituting the sacrament of Reconciliation. (Jn. 20: 19-23) (CCC 1461)
2. Give examples of how the Church uses Scripture to nourish and find strength, “in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them,” especially in the Liturgy of the Word. (CCC 104)

D. Be familiar with the structure and contents of Sacred Scripture and be able to use it.

Not at this level.

E. Know and understand the articles of the Apostles' Creed.

“I Believe in God the Father”

1. Realize that God is our beginning and our end. (CCC 229)
2. Explain that Jesus is the Son of God, one with the Father. (CCC 242, 262)
3. Recognize that God made all creation good. (CCC 299)
4. Explain how sin harms or breaks our friendship with God. (CCC 386)

“I Believe in Jesus Christ, the Only Son of God”

5. Explain the Son of God became man so that we could know God's love and so that Jesus could save us from our sins. (CCC 430, 458)
6. Realize that we adore God hidden in the weakness of a newborn child, Jesus, especially at Christmas. (CCC 525-26, 563)
7. Articulate and explain the meaning of “Christ died for our sins” and that Jesus' resurrection is at the heart of our faith. (CCC 601, 619, 638, 802)

“I Believe in the Holy Spirit.”

8. Explain the meaning of “God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying ‘Abba! Father!’” (CCC 683, 742)
9. State that the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray. (CCC 741)

“I Believe in the Holy Catholic Church”

10. Describe how the Church is the People of God and the Body of Christ. (CCC 753, 777)
11. Articulate that Mary is the Mother of God and our mother. (CCC 963, 973)
12. Listen to and retell stories of the lives of the saints (CCC 2030)

“I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins.”

13. Explain that God forgives our sins in Baptism and Penance. (CCC 977, 980)

“I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body.”

Not at this level.

“I Believe in Life Everlasting.”

Not at this level.

Sacraments – Celebration of the Christian Mystery

Section two pertains to the way God continues to make available to us His grace won for us by Jesus' saving Death and Resurrection. We receive God's saving grace in the sacraments which are actions of God to bring us into communion with Him and to strengthen us to remain in communion with Him. He has given us a share in His divine life-for no other reason than He loves us. We need to respond to the grace God gives us in the Sacraments.

Catholic school/parish catechetical students in the Diocese of Madison will know and appreciate the centrality of the Eucharist and the importance of the sacraments in the life of Catholics.

F. Understand and participate in liturgical seasons, feasts, and celebrations. (CCC 1076-1199, 1273)

1. Recognize that just as Jesus shared his life with the apostles and others during his earthly life, he now shares this very same life with us through his sacraments. (CCC 1115)
2. Explain that sacraments are “powers that come forth” from the Body of Christ; actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. (CCC 1116)

G. Name, define, and describe each of the seven sacraments of the Church and will know how to participate in the celebration of each (CCC Baptism 1210-84, Confirmation 1285-1321, Eucharist 1322-1419, Reconciliation 1422-98, Anointing of the Sick 1499-1532, Holy Orders 1536-1600, Matrimony 1601-66)

1. Connect Baptism with the forgiveness of sins, original and personal, and new birth in the Holy Spirit. (CCC 1262-63)
2. Explain that bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus during the Mass. (CCC 1333)
3. Explain that to receive Holy Communion you must be free from serious sin and fast for one hour from food and drink. (CCC 1385-7)
4. Explain that our life of grace - our connection to God - can be lost by sin. (CCC 1420)
5. Explain that Reconciliation is a sacrament of God's mercy and healing. (CCC 1421-2)
6. Show how when we're sorry for our sins, we tell them to a priest who in the Name of Jesus Christ, forgives our sins with the prayer of absolution. (CCC 1451-6, 1461-65, 1493)
7. Describe how after our sins are forgiven, we do penance, such as a prayer or action which forms good habits of virtue. (CCC 1459-60, 1494)
8. Defend why the priest must keep secret all sins confessed to him. (CCC 1467)

H. Understand the Eucharist has a special and central place in the life of the Church and in their own lives because it contains the very act of redemption which Jesus accomplished in his life, death, and resurrection. (CCC: 1322-1419)

1. Describe that the Eucharist unites us with Jesus and nourishes our union with Him; we thus adore him present in us when we receive Holy Communion. (CCC 1378, 1391-2)

Morality –Life in Christ

Section three is about how we should respond to Jesus' love by the way we live. As his children, we should live as he has asked. The moral life is not an arbitrary list of rules, but laws of love that help us to know how to live to stay close to Jesus. Living life as Jesus asks us to live leads to true joy and peace.

Catholic school/parish catechetical students in the Diocese of Madison will understand and reflect the dignity of the human person and his vocation to freely know, love and serve God and neighbor. With the help of grace, they will seek holiness by avoiding sin, growing in virtue, and entrusting themselves to the mercy of God.

I. Understand the dignity of every human person stemming from their creation in the image and likeness of God. (CCC 1691-1876)

1. State that Jesus is our model for how to live. (CCC 1693, 1698)
2. Give an example of how sin can be in words, deeds or thoughts against God's law. (CCC 1849, 1871-1872)
3. Explain the difference between mortal and venial sins. (CCC 1854-56)
4. Describe how when we confess our sins and turn back to God, he will forgive us. (CCC 1847-48)
5. Distinguish between sin as a deliberate choice of something we know to be wrong and accidents and ignorance. (CCC 1874)
6. Recognize that we must follow the moral law, which urges us to do what is good and avoid what is evil. This law makes itself heard in our consciences. (CCC 1713)

J. Understand that the human person is made for communion, both with God and the human community. (CCC 1877-1948)

1. Identify and describe Jesus' new commandment to us: love one another as he has loved us. (CCC 1970, 1972)
2. Connect the love and service to God to loving and serving our neighbor. (CCC 1878)

K. Understand that wounded by sin, man needs salvation by God who comes to him in Christ who teaches us the law of love and recreates us in his image through the gift of his grace. (CCC 1949-2051)

1. Retell the story of the Prodigal Son. (Lk. 15: 11-32)
2. Connect the story of the Prodigal Son to your Reconciliation. (Lk. 15:11-32)
3. Describe grace as God's life in us. (CCC 1997)

L. Understand how to judge the morality of acts and how the conscience is properly formed. (CCC 1730-1802)

1. Explain that conscience as being that which God puts in us to tell us what is right and wrong. (CCC 1777-1778, 1796)
2. Explain why we need to examine our consciences daily, and in preparation for the sacrament of Penance. (CCC 1781)
3. Explain the concept of free will and its role in choosing good or evil. (CCC 1730-1732)
4. Describe how God provides guidance through Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and the teaching of the Church. (CCC 1785)
5. Explain why attending Mass on Sunday is a privilege and duty, and to skip it is a grave sin. (CCC 2180-2181)
6. Explain that good habits are developed by constant practice. (CCC 1804)

M. Understand the Ten Commandments. (CCC 2052-2557)

1. Relate the Ten Commandments to the examination of conscience. (CCC 1454, 1962)
2. Compare and contrast the Ten Commandments - the first three commandments as relating to God and the last seven commandments as to how we treat others. (CCC 2067)

1st Commandment

2nd Commandment

3. Discuss how God's name is holy, and we must respect it and not use it thoughtlessly. (CCC 2142-46, 2161)

3rd Commandment

4. Explain why attending Mass on Sunday is a privilege and duty, and to skip it is a grave sin. (CCC 2180-2181)

4th Commandment

5. Explain that children must obey their parents, guardians and teachers. (CCC 2199, 2214-17, 2248, 2251)
6. Recognize that parents must regard their children as children of God and respect them as human persons. (CCC 2222)

5th Commandment

7. Explain that as Christians, we are called to be peacemakers in our homes, schools and society. (CCC 2305, 2330)

6th Commandment

8. Recognize that the sacrament of marriage makes holy the promise of a man and a woman to love each other as husband and wife. (CCC 2360, 2365)

7th Commandment

9. State that stealing is taking the property of another without permission; it is against the seventh commandment. (CCC 2408, 2453)

8th Commandment

10. State that lying is purposefully saying what is untrue: it is an offense against the eighth commandment. (CCC 2482-86, 2508)

9th Commandment

10th Commandment

Christian Prayer

Prayer is an essential way we respond to God who loved us first. Prayer is necessary if we are to know God personally and to do His will. Living the Christian Life is almost impossible without prayer.

Catholic school/parish catechetical students in the Diocese of Madison will understand the revelation and tradition of the Catholic life of prayer.

N. Understand what prayer is and the revelation of prayer. (CCC 2559 – 2649)

1. Explain that we pray because God is greater than we are. (CCC 2559)
2. Articulate a personal prayer of sorrow. (CCC 2631)

O. Understand the Catholic Christian tradition of prayer (CCC 2650 – 2696)

1. Demonstrate Catholic use of a sacramental for prayer purposes. (CCC 1677-78)

P. Understand and experience the Catholic Christian life of prayer (CCC 2697 – 2758)

1. Demonstrate and explain prayer gestures: blessing before Gospel. (CC 2663)
2. Recite an Act of Contrition.
3. Recite Mass responses.

Q. Understand the Lord's prayer as a summary of the whole gospel and its many uses within the Christian life (CCC 2759 – 2865)

1. Explain that Jesus gave us the "Our Father" when the apostles asked him how to pray. (CCC 2759, 2773)

Prayers to Learn

Children in Second Grade should be introduced to the new bolded prayers while review the previously learned prayers. Children should be able to recite with limited guidance. Prayers to be taught this year are in bold:

1. Sign of the Cross
2. Our Father
3. Hail Mary
4. Glory Be
5. Prayer before meals
6. Prayer to Guardian Angel
7. **Act of Contrition**
8. **Introduced to Apostles & Nicene Creed**
9. **Mass responses**
10. **Introduce Stations of the Cross (during Lent– children's versions can be used)**

Children of this age group should be participating in the following forms of prayer:

1. Spontaneous Prayer
2. Gestures: Genuflection, Sign of the Cross, blessing oneself with Holy water
3. Song as prayer
4. Reflection: thinking about God and listening while reading from Scripture
5. Silence: at Mass or in the Church (beginning to develop a sense of reverence)
6. Participate in a Rosary: Joyful Mysteries, **Sorrowful Mysteries**
7. **Participate in Devotions: Stations of the Cross**
8. Saint intercession

Children of this age should know and recognize the following sacramentals:

1. Crucifix
2. Bible
3. Images of Jesus & Mary
4. **Images of Saints**
5. Rosary—as a way to pray with Mary (Joyful Mysteries, **Sorrowful Mysteries**)
6. Items in the Church: Tabernacle, Presider's chair, Holy Water font, Crucifix, candles (method of prayer)
7. **Items used at Mass: vestments, chalice, ciborium, hosts, wine, ambo, altar, purificator, corporal, cruets, thurible, incense, lectionary, sacramentary**

Vocations

From the moment of our baptism, God has a special plan for each of us. God calls us to life in Christ, in order that, with Christ, we may offer our whole life in love of God and our neighbor. At our confirmation, God strengthens and increases that the life of the Holy Spirit within us, so that we will have the inspiration and strength to respond to God's call.

The official definition of the word vocation according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church is: The calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter. God has created the human person to love and serve him; the fulfillment of this vocation is eternal happiness (CCC 1, 358, 1700). Christ calls the faithful to perfection and holiness (CCC 825). The Vocation of the laity consists in seeking the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will (CCC 898). Priestly and religious vocations are dedicated to the service of the Church as the universal sacrament of Salvation (873, 931).

In Second Grade the children should be taught the church's teaching on vocations as an independent session or incorporated into a daily plan. They should specifically learn: God knows and loves each person. The Call from God is called a vocation. This special plan for our lives will bring us the greatest joy and peace. We are all called to be holy and love God in return. It is also important that the children are taught that some people are called to **married**, some to remain **single**, some to the **priesthood** and some to the **religious life** (sisters and brothers).

Bible and Catechism

Students in Second Grade should have a strong understanding that the Bible is God's word to us. They should understand that God himself is the Author who used human authors to do the writing. They should know that there is an Old and a New Testament. Old is everything before Jesus and the New is everything after Jesus. They can be introduced to looking things up (though they will not master this skill in 2nd grade). They should be read to regularly from Scripture and they should understand that what we hear at Mass is readings from the Bible.

Prayers

Act of Contrition

*O my God,
I am heartily sorry for
having offended Thee,
and I detest all my sins,
because I dread the loss of heaven,
and the pains of hell;
but most of all because
they offend Thee, my God,
Who are all good and
deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve,
with the help of Thy grace,
to confess my sins,
to do penance,
and to amend my life.
Amen.*

(any act of contrition is appropriate)

Apostles Creed

*I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ,
His only Son Our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into Hell;
the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into Heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God, the Fa-
ther almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the
living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body
and life everlasting.
Amen.*

Nicene Creed

*I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of
the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the
Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the
Son,
who with the Father and the Son is
adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and ap-
ostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgive-
ness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection
of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.*

Mysteries of the Rosary**THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES***(Tuesdays and Fridays):*

1. *The Agony in the Garden*
2. *The Scourging at the Pillar*
3. *The Crowning of Thorns*
4. *The Carrying of the Cross*
5. *The Crucifixion*

Stations of the Cross**Opening Prayer**

Mary, my Mother, you were the first to live the Way of the Cross. You felt every pain and every humiliation. You were unafraid of the ridicule heaped upon you by the crowds. Your eyes were ever on Jesus and His Pain. Is that the secret of your miraculous strength? How did your loving heart bear such a burden and such a weight? As you watched Him stumble and fall, were you tortured by the memory of all the yesterdays- His birth, His hidden life and His ministry? You were so desirous of everyone loving Him. What a heartache it was to see so many hate Him - hate with a diabolical fury. Take my hand as I make this Way of the Cross. Inspire me with those thoughts that will make me realize how much He loves me. Give me light to apply each station to my daily life and to remember my neighbor's needs in this Way of the Pain. Obtain for me the grace to understand the mystery, the wisdom and the Divine love as I go from scene to scene. Grant that my heart, like yours, may be pierced through by the sight of His sorrow and the misery and that I may determine never to offend Him again. What a price He paid to cover my sins, to open the gates of heaven for me and to fill my soul with His own Spirit. Sweet Mother, let us travel this way together and grant that the love in my poor heart may give you some slight consolation.

Amen.

The First Station: Jesus Is Condemned To Death

My Jesus, the world still has You on trial. It keeps asking who You are and why You make the demands You make. It asks over and over the question, If You are God's Son, why do You permit the world to be in the state it is in? Why are You so silent?

Though the arrogance of the world angers me, I must admit that silently, in the depths of my soul, I too have these questions. Your humility frustrates me and makes me uncomfortable. Your strength before Pilate as You drank deeply from the power of the Father, gives me the answer to my question - The Father's Will. The Father permits many sufferings in my life but it is all for my good. If only I too could be silent in the face of worldly prudence - steadfast in the faith when all seems lost - calm when accused unjustly - free from tyranny of human respect - ready to do the Father's Will no matter how difficult.

Silent Jesus, give us all the graces we need to stand tall in the face of the ridicule of the world. Give the poor the strength not to succumb to their privation but to be ever aware of their dignity as sons of God. Grant that we might not bend to the crippling disease of worldly glory but be willing to be deprived of all things rather than lose Your friendship. My Jesus, though we are accused daily of being fools, let the vision of Quiet Dignity standing before Monstrous Injustice, give us all the courage to be Your followers.

Amen

The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

How could any human impose such a burden upon Your torn and bleeding body, Lord Jesus? Each movement of the cross drove the thorns deeper into Your Head. How did You keep the hatred from welling up in Your Heart? How did the injustice of it all not ruffle your peace? The Father's Will was hard on You - Why do I complain when it is hard on me?

I see injustice and am frustrated and when my plans to alleviate it seems futile, I despair. When I see those burdened with poverty suffer ever more and cross is added to cross my heart is far from serene. I utterly fail to see the dignity of the cross as it is carried with love. I would so much rather be without it.

My worldly concept is that suffering, like food, should be shared equally. How ridiculous I am, dear Lord. Just as we do not all need the same amount of material food, neither do we need the same amount of spiritual food and that is what the cross is in my life, isn't it - spiritual food proportional to my needs.

Amen

The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

My Jesus, it seems to me, that as God, You would have carried Your cross without faltering, but You did not. You fell beneath it's weight to show me You understand when I fall. Is it pride that makes me want to shine even in pain? You were not ashamed to fall- to admit the cross was heavy. There are those in world whom my pride will not tolerate as I expect everyone to be strong, yet I am weak. I am ashamed to admit failure in anything.

If the Father permits failure in my life just as He permitted You to fall, then I must know there is good in that failure which my mind will never comprehend. I must not concentrate on the eyes of others as they rest upon me in my falls. Rather, I must reach up to touch that invisible hand and drink in that invisible strength ever at my side.

Weak Jesus, help all men who try so hard to be good but whose nature is constantly opposed to them walking straight and tall down the narrow road of life. Raise their heads to see the glory that is to come rather than the misery of the present moment.

Your love for me gave You strength to rise from Your fall. Look upon all those whom the world considers unprofitable servants and give them the courage to be more concerned as to how they stand before You, rather than their fellowmen.

Amen

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

My Jesus, it was a great sorrow to realize Your pain caused Mary so much grief. As Redeemer, You wanted her to share in Your pain for mankind. When You glanced at each other in unutterable suffering, what gave you both the courage to carry on without the least alleviation - without anger at such injustice?

It seems as if you desired to suffer every possible pain to give me an example of how to suffer when my time comes. What a humiliation for You when Your mother saw you in such a pitiable state - weak - helpless - at the mercy of sinful men - holiness exposed to evil in all hideousness.

Did every moment of that short encounter seem like an eternity? As I see so much suffering in the world, there are times I think it is all hopeless. There is an element of lethargy in my prayers for mankind that says "I'll pray, but what good will it do? The sick grow sicker and the hungry starve. " I think of that glance between You and Mary - the glance that said, "Let us give this misery to the Father for the salvation of souls. The Father's power takes our pain and frustration and renews souls, saves them for a new life - a life of eternal joy, eternal happiness. It is worth it all." Give perseverance to the sick so they can carry the cross of frustration and agony with love and resignation for the salvation of others.

Amen

The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

My Jesus, Your tormentors enlisted a Simon of Cyrene to help You carry Your cross. Your humility is beyond my comprehension. Your power upheld the whole universe and yet You permit one of Your creatures to help You carry a cross. I imagine Simon was reluctant to take part in Your shame. He had no idea that all who watched and jeered at him would pass into oblivion while his name would go down in history and eternity as the one who helped his God in need. Is it not so with me, dear Jesus? Even when I reluctantly carry my cross as Simon did, it benefits my soul.

If I keep my eyes on You and watch how You suffered, I will be able to bear my cross with greater fortitude. Were you trying to tell all those who suffer from prejudice to have courage? Was Simon a symbol of all those who are hated because of race, color and creed?

Simon wondered as he took those beams upon his shoulders, why he was chosen for such a heavy burden and now he knows. Help me Jesus, to trust your loving Providence as you permit suffering to weave itself in and out of my life. Make me understand that You looked at it and held it fondly before You passed it on to me. You watch me and give me strength just as You did Simon. When I enter Your Kingdom, I shall know as he knows, what marvels Your Cross has wrought in my soul.

Amen

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

My Jesus, where were all the hundreds of peoples whose bodies and souls were healed by you? Where were they when You needed someone to give You the least sign of comfort? Ingratitude must have borne down upon Your heart and made the cross nearly impossible to carry. There are times I too feel all my efforts for Your Kingdom are futile and end in nothingness. Did your eyes roam through the crowd for the comfort of just one individual - one sign of pity - one sign of grief?

My heart thrills with a sad joy when I think of one woman, breaking away from fear and human respect and offering You her thin veil to wipe Your bleeding Face. Your loving heart, ever watching for the least sign of love, imprinted the Image of your torn Face upon it! How can You forget Yourself so completely and reward such a small act of kindness?

I must admit, I have been among those who were afraid to know You rather than like Veronica. She did not care if the whole world knew she loved You. Heartbroken Jesus, give me that quality of the soul so necessary to witness to spread Your Word - to tell all people of Your love for them. Send many into Your Vineyard so the people of all nations may receive the Good News. Imprint Your Divine Image upon my soul and let the thin veil of my human nature bear a perfect resemblance to your loving Spirit.

Amen

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls A Second Time

My Jesus, one of the beautiful qualities the people admired in You was Your strength in time of ridicule - Your ability to rise above the occasion. But now, You fall a second time - apparently conquered by the pain of the Cross. People who judged You by appearances made a terrible mistake. What looked like weakness was unparalleled strength!

I often judge by appearances and how wrong I am most of the time. The world judges entirely by this fraudulent method of discerning. It looks down upon those who apparently have given their best and are now in need. It judges the poor as failures, the sick as useless and the aged as a burden. How wrong that kind of judgment is in the light of your second fall! Your greatest moment was Your weakest one. Your greatest triumph was in failure. Your greatest act of love was in desolation. Your greatest show of power was in that utter lack of strength that threw You to the ground.

Weak and powerful Jesus, give me the grace to see beyond what is visible and be more aware of Your Wisdom in the midst of weakness. Give the aged, sick, handicapped, retarded, deaf and blind the fruit of joy so they may ever be aware of the Father's gift and the vast difference between what the world sees and what the Father sees that they may glory in their weakness so the power of God may be manifest.

Amen

The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Holy Women

My Jesus, I am amazed at Your compassion for others in Your time of need. When I suffer, I have a tendency to think only of myself but You forgot Yourself completely. When You saw the holy women weeping over Your torments, You consoled them and taught them to look deeper into Your Passion. You wanted them to understand that the real evil to cry over was the rejection You suffered from the Chosen people - a people set apart from every other nation, who refused to accept God's Son.

The Act of Redemption would go on and no one would ever be able to take away Your dignity as Son of God, but the evil, greed, jealousy and ambition in the hearts of those who should have recognized You was the issue to grieve over. To be so close to God made man and miss Him completely was the real crime.

My Jesus, I fear I do the same when I strain gnats and then swallow camels - when I take out the splinter in my brother's eye and forget the beam in my own. It is such a gift - this gift of faith. It is such a sublime grace to possess Your own Spirit. Why haven't I advanced in holiness of life? I miss the many disguises you take upon Yourself and see only people, circumstances and human events, not the loving hand of the Father guiding all things. Help all those who are discouraged, sick, lonely and old to recognize Your Presence in their midst.

Amen

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

My Jesus, even with the help of Simon You fell a third time. Were You telling me that there may be times in my life that I will fall again and again despite the help of friends and loved ones? There are times when the crosses You permit in my life are more than I can bear. It is as if all the sufferings of a life time are suddenly compressed into the present moment and it is more than I can stand.

Though it grieves my heart to see You so weak and helpless, it is a comfort to my soul to know that you understand my sufferings from Your own experience. Your love for me made You want to experience every kind of pain just so I could have someone to look to for example and courage.

When I cry out from the depths of my soul, "This suffering is more than I can bear," do You whisper, "Yes, I understand"? When I am discouraged after many falls, do you say in my innermost being, "Keep going, I know how hard it is to rise"?

There are many people who are sorely tried in body and soul with alcohol and drug weaknesses who try and try and fall again and again. Through the humiliation of this third fall, give them the courage and perseverance to take up their cross and follow you.

Amen

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

It seems that every step to Calvary brought You fresh humiliation, my Jesus. How Your sensitive nature recoiled at being stripped before a crowd of people. You desired to leave this life as You entered it - completely detached from all the comforts of this world. You want me to know without a doubt that you loved me with an unselfish love. Your love for me caused You nothing but pain and sorrow. You gave everything and received nothing in return. Why do I find it so hard to be detached?

In your loving mind, dear Jesus, did You look up to the Father as You stood there on that windy hill, shivering from cold and shame and trembling from fear, and ask Him to have mercy on those who would violate their purity and make love a mockery? Did you ask forgiveness for those whose greed would make them lie, cheat and steal for a few pieces of cold silver?

Forgive us all, dear Jesus. Look upon the world with pity, for mankind has lost its way and the principles of this world make lust a fun game and luxury a necessity. Detachment has become merely another hardship of the poor and obedience the fault of the weak. Have mercy on us and grant the people of this day the courage to see and know themselves and the light to change.

Amen

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

It is hard to imagine a God being nailed to a cross by His own creatures. It is even more difficult for my mind to understand a love that permitted such a thing to happen! As those men drove heavy nails into Your hands and feet, dear Jesus, did You offer the pain as reparation for some particular human weakness and sin? Was the nail in Your right hand for those who spend their lives in dissipation and boredom?

Was the nail in Your left hand in reparation for all consecrated souls who live lukewarm lives? Were You stretching out Your arms to show us how much You love us? As the feet that walked the hot, dusty roads were nailed fast, did they cramp up in a deadly grip of pain to make reparation for all those who so nimbly run the broad road of sin and self-indulgence?

It seems, dear Jesus, Your love has held You bound hand and foot as Your heart pleads for a return of love. You seem to shout from the top of the hill "I love you - come to me - see, I am held fast - I cannot hurt you - only you can hurt Me." How very hard is the heart that can see such love and turn away. Is it not true I too have turned away when I did not accept the Father's Will with love? Teach me to keep my arms ever open to love, to forgive and to render service - willing to be hurt rather than hurt, satisfied to love and not be loved in return.

Amen

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

God is dead! No wonder the earth quaked, the sun hid itself, the dead rose and Mary stood by in horror. Your human body gave up its soul in death but Your Divinity, dear Jesus, continued to manifest its power. All creation rebelled as the Word made Flesh departed from this world. Man alone was too proud to see and too stubborn to acknowledge truth.

Redemption was accomplished! Man would never have an excuse to forget how much You loved him. The thief on Your right saw something he could not explain - he saw a man on a tree and knew He was God. His need made him see his own guilt and Your innocence. The Promise of eternal life made the remaining hours of his torture endurable.

A common thief responded to Your love with deep Faith, Hope, and Love. He saw more than his eyes envisioned - he felt a Presence he could not explain and would not argue with. He was in need and accepted the way God designed to help him.

Forgive our pride, dear Jesus as we spend hours speculating, days arguing and often a lifetime in rejecting Your death, which is a sublime mystery. Have pity on those whose intelligence leads them to pride because they never feel the need to reach out to the Man of Sorrows for consolation.

Amen

The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down From the Cross

My Jesus, it was with deep grief that Mary finally took You into her arms and saw all the wounds sin had inflicted upon You. Mary Magdalene looked upon Your dead Body with horror. Nicodemus, the man so full of human respect, who came to You by night, suddenly received the courage to help Joseph take you down from the Cross. You are once more surrounded by only a few followers. When loneliness and failure cross my path, let me think of this lonely moment and this total failure - failure in the eyes of men. How wrong they were - how mistaken their concept of success! The greatest act of love was given in desolation and the most successful mission accomplished and finished when all seemed lost. Is this not true in my life, dear Jesus? I judge my failures harshly. I demand perfection instead of holiness. My idea of success is for all to end well - according to my liking.

Give to all men the grace to see that doing Your Will is more important than success. If failure is permitted for my greater good then teach me how to use it to my advantage. Let me say as You once said, that to do the Will of the Father is my food. Let not the standards of this world take possession of me or destroy the good You have set for me - to be Holy and to accomplish the Father's Will with great love. Let me accept praise or blame, success or failure with equal serenity.

Amen

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Sepulcher

My Jesus, You were laid to rest in a stranger's tomb. You were born with nothing of this world's goods and You died detached from everything. When You came into the world, men slept and angels sang and now as You leave it, Creation is silent and only a few weep. Both events were clothed in obscurity. The majority of men live in such a way. Most of us live and die knowing and known by only a few. Were You trying to tell us, dear Jesus, how very important our lives are just because we are accomplishing the Father's Will? Will we ever learn the lesson of humility that makes us content with who we are, where we are and what we are?

Will our Faith ever be strong enough to see power in weakness and good in the sufferings of our lives? Will our Hope be trusting enough to rely on Your Providence even when we have nowhere to lay our head? Will our Love ever be strong enough not to take scandal in the cross?

My Jesus, hide my soul in Your heart as You lie in the Sepulcher alone. Let my heart be as a fire to keep you warm. Let my desire to know and love You be like a torch to light up the darkness. Let my soul sing softly a hymn of repentant love as the hours pass and Your Resurrection is at hand. Let me rejoice, dear Jesus, with all the Angels in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving for so great a love- so great a God- so great a day!

Amen

Closing Prayer

My Jesus, I have traveled Your Way of the cross. It seems so real and I feel so ashamed. I complain of my sufferings and find obedience to the Father's Will difficult. My Mind bogged down by the poverty, sickness, starvation, greed and hatred in the world. There are many innocent people who suffer so unjustly. There are those born with physical and mental defects. Do we understand that You continue to carry Your cross in the minds and bodies of each human being? Help me to see the Father's Will in every incident of my daily life. This is what You did - you saw the Father's Will in Your persecutors, Your enemies and your pain. You saw a beauty in the Cross and embraced it as a desired treasure. My worldly mind is dulled by injustice and suffering and I lose sight of the glory that is to come. Help me to trust the Father and to realize that there is something great behind the most insignificant suffering. There is Someone lifting my cross to fit my shoulders - there is Divine Wisdom in all the petty annoyances that irk my soul every day. Teach me the lessons contained in my Cross, the wisdom of its necessity, the beauty of its variety and the fortitude that accompanies even the smallest cross. Mary, My Mother, obtain for me the grace to be Jesus to my neighbor and to see my neighbor in Jesus.

Amen.