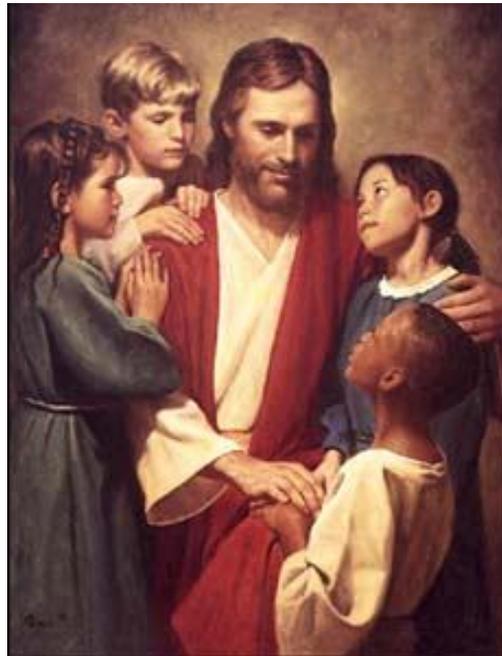


Preschool/ Kindergarten

Diocese of Madison Catechetical Standards



Introduction	2
Profile of a Preschool/Kindergarten Child	3
Characteristics	3
Moral Developmental Needs	3
Catechetical Implications	4
Story of Salvation History	5
Standards and Benchmarks	
Creed	7
Sacraments	9
Morality	10
Prayer	12
Resources	
Prayers to Learn & Sacramentals	13
Vocations	14
Prayers	15

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.

Pre-Kindergarten/ Kindergarten

Characteristics of a Pre-K/Kindergarten Child

- ◇ Sits still for limited amounts of time
- ◇ In kindergarten, they may be able to attend to tasks for 10-15 minutes
- ◇ Learns through active involvement of mind and body/sensory learning
- ◇ Learns through manipulative and play, stories, rhymes etc
- ◇ Sees predominantly from a ego-centric point of view (developmentally very self centered)
- ◇ Imaginative and creative
- ◇ Beginning to understand the difference between fantasy & reality
- ◇ Relates to concrete experiences in everyday life
- ◇ Learns through repetition and review
- ◇ Listens and follows simple 1-3 step instructions
- ◇ Desires to be independent but needs support
- ◇ Enjoys making choices and understands the existence of a system of “rules”
- ◇ Needs individual attention and praise
- ◇ Is developing sensitivity and to feelings/attitudes of adults and others around them
- ◇ Enjoys experiences where given an opportunity to succeed and receive affirmation
- ◇ Needs to feel acceptance because of a delicate self image
- ◇ Learning to “be” and cooperate as a part of a group

Faith & Moral Development Needs

- ◇ The child, in order to develop spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually and socially needs to be recognized, valued, praised and accepted as a child of God as well as a unique individual with specific gifts and talents
- ◇ Needs opportunities and examples of “appropriate” virtuous behavior (thoughtfulness, kindness, obedience, sharing etc. all examples of how Jesus lived and the lives of the saints)
- ◇ Is capable of understanding love and God as the first and best lover (Due to their experience of human love)
- ◇ Needs to feel loved by God appreciated by others therefore, needs a sense of belonging to a family, class and the Church
- ◇ Are capable of learning creation and uniqueness of all things in creation
- ◇ Is capable to recognize the bible is a holy and special book written by God
- ◇ Are capable of learning and recognizing symbols and gestures used in liturgy
- ◇ Crucifix, Chalice, bible, holy water priest, genuflecting, sign of the Cross
- ◇ Is beginning to understand and should be expected to show thankfulness
- ◇ Needs affirmation when acting in a virtuous way (acts of kindness etc.) A healthy self concept is encouraged by positive reinforcement including the fact that God made each person and loves each person

- ◇ May lack understanding of cause and effect relationships of intentional or unintentional actions
- ◇ Is capable of learning to pray. Prayer for this age is talking to God as they talk to all other people they know. Should also be encouraged to participate in group prayer and other religious activities

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.
- ◇ To encourage a positive self image, the catechist should take opportunities to interact individually with each child recognizing him/her as a unique gift of God
- ◇ Catechists should 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. God is a family; he is a communion of persons - Father, Son & Holy Spirit. (CCC 237)
3. Understand that all creation is gift from God (CCC 293—295)

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

1. Recognize that we all have a desire to know God and be friends with him. (CCC 27)
2. Name things for which they are grateful to God. (CCC 224)

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

1. Listen and generally retell the Bible stories of:
 - a. Creation (Genesis 1: 1-24, 31)
 - b. Noah’s Ark (Gen 7:11-8: 22)
 - c. The Annunciation (Lk 1:26-35)
 - d. The Nativity (Lk. 2: 1-20; CCC 525)
 - e. Jesus blessing the children (Lk. 18: 15-17, Mk 10: 13-16, Mt. 19: 13-15).
 - f. Jesus and his disciples (Lk 6: 12-16)
 - g. Last Supper (Mk. 14: 12-42)
 - h. Death & Resurrection (Jn 19 & 20)

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

1. Recognize the Bible as the book that God gave us to tell us about his love. (CCC 81,105).

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

"I Believe in God the Father"

1. Express that God created all things. (CCC 290)
2. Tell that God loves us and gave us the gift of life. (CCC 218-221)
3. Recognize that God always was and will be (God has no beginning and no end). (CCC 212-213, 220)

"I Believe in Jesus Christ, the Only Son of God"

4. Identify Jesus as God's only Son. (CCC, 423, 430 - 451)
5. Recognize that God sent his Son, Jesus, to teach us how to live good lives. (CCC 459)
6. Identify Mary as Jesus' Mother. (CCC 488)

"I Believe in the Holy Spirit."

7. Identify the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. (CCC 151, 243)

"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"

8. Recognize that those who follow God are a part of his family, the Church. (CCC 764)
9. Recognize that our families, class and parish are part of the Church.
10. Recognize the name of the parish priest and the diocesan bishop.

"I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins."

Not at this level.

"I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body."

Not at this level.

"I Believe in Life Everlasting."

11. Express that God wants all people to be with him in heaven. (CCC 1023-24, 1716-29)
12. Understand the angels exist in Heaven with God and are his messengers. (CCC 331-333)

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. Participate in Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
2. Recognize liturgical seasons. (CCC 1171)

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. Recognize that we are welcomed into the Catholic community of faith. (CCC 1213)
2. Describe a Baptism. (CCC 1213)
3. Recognize that baptism is the door by which we enter the family of the Church (CCC 1213).

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. Know that Jesus is in the Tabernacle & demonstrate a reverence for the Eucharist. (CCC 1378-1379)
2. Recognize that it is important that we go to Mass every Sunday and when we go to Mass He blesses us. (CCC 2176)

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 we are created in the image and likeness of God. (CCC 1700-1715)
2. Recall that God wants us to be eternally happy with him in heaven when we die. (CCC 1716-1729)

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

1. Recognize that our own behavior affects others. (CCC 1877-1896)
2. God loves us and wants us to show love for others. (CCC 356-357)

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. Recognize that there are good choices and bad choices. We must always do good. When we do not do good we say sorry to others and to God. (CCC 2082-83, 2087, 277)

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

Not at this level

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

1. State that the reason God gave us laws/rules, called the Ten Commandments, is to help us know how to be happy and good. Some are: Go to Church on Sunday; Pray to God; Tell the truth; Love your parents; and, Don't take something that is not yours.
(CCC 1730-61, 2055-56)

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. Describe prayer as our conversation with God in which we talk to and listen to God. (CCC 2564-65, 2607, 2615)
2. Articulate a personal prayer of thanksgiving. (CCC 2638)
3. Recognize that we can pray silently or out loud

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

1. Explain that the church building as God's house and the place we come together as God's family to pray. (CCC 2691, 2696)
2. Explain that the Mass is the most important prayer. (CCC 1074, 1118, 1324, 1326)
3. Recognize the priest is the one who leads us in prayer. (CCC 1591-92)

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

1. Demonstrate prayer gestures: folding hands to pray and kneeling. (CCC 2663)
2. Recite Glory Be, the words and actions of the sign of the cross, and blessings before and after meals. (CCC 2157)

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. Express that Amen means "I believe". (CCC 2856)

Prayers to learn

Children in PreK-Kindergarten should be introduced to the following Prayers and should be able to recite with some guidance. Prayers in bold are new to the child in this school year:

- 1. Sign of the Cross**
- 2. Our Father**
- 3. Hail Mary**
- 5. Prayer before meals**
- 6. Mass responses: “Amen”; “Alleluia”; “Lord, hear our Prayer”**

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)**

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

- 1. Crucifix**
- 2. Bible**
- 3. Images of Jesus & Mary**
- 4. Rosary—as a way to pray with Mary**
- 5. Items in the Church: Tabernacle, Presider’s chair, Holy Water font, Crucifix, candles (method of prayer)**

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 **PreK & K** 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. From the Moment of our Baptism, God has a special plan for each person. They should be taught that for some that plan is to be **married and be parents**. For others it is to **not get married**. For some men God wants them to be **priests** and for some women to be **sisters**.

Bible & Catechism

Children in PreK-K should be introduced to the bible as a Holy Book, as God's Word written for us. They should be read to from scripture with the teacher then offering explanation. They should learn to treat the bible with reverence.

Prayers

Sign of the Cross

*In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit*

Amen

Our Father

*Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in
Heaven. Give us this day our daily
bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

Amen.

Hail Mary

*Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of death.*

Amen.

Prayer before meals

*Bless us Oh Lord,
and these thy gifts,
which we are about to receive,
from thy bounty,
through Christ, Our Lord.*

Amen.