

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE

ESTABLISHING AN ANNUAL CALENDAR

SACRED TIME

As Catholic Christians we are called by Jesus to reach out to others. “Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me... In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:31-40)

This is our commission in faith. The time that we are given to accomplish the mission of the Reign of God is indeed sacred time. To understand the development of a calendar as simply a planning tool is to forget our essential mission. God has chosen to save us through the process of history. God formed a covenant with our ancestors. God joined us in time as one of us - it is this commitment by God to our time which hallows it and makes it sacred. We have been chosen as collaborators with the Holy Spirit to reconcile the world to God. The parish calendar is the outward sign of how the parish will serve the Reign of God



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CALENDAR CONTENT

Diocesan policy 401.20 states that all parishes are to have a minimum of 42 hours of religious education per year. Included in this **42** hours are all the components of catechesis: *message, community, worship and service*. A quality catechetical program which seeks to form disciples of Christ must have an integrated approach which includes the four dimensions of catechesis no matter the age of the person being formed. Faith is more than information. Faith is a living quality of spirit that assumes information, but is so much more. Our task is the formation of disciples of Jesus. We need to make what we teach alive so that when others see us they remark: “see how they have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

The Diocesan Curriculum found in Section 501 of this Handbook includes expectations for each of the components of catechesis. The Curriculum is organized to highlight all four of these critical components. It is the intention of the Curriculum that students in each grade be exposed to objectives from all four dimensions.

The Curriculum does not assume that any parish could meet every objective in each year. Each parish must employ various curriculum activities that meet their specific needs while working to achieve the entire Diocesan Curriculum. Calendar planning is a tool to see how well we are meeting our goals.

CALENDARS ARE FOR SHARING

Ideally, parents could receive a copy of the calendar for the upcoming year when the end of year progress reports are distributed. Providing parents with dates early will give them the opportunity to mark their calendars and plan for the upcoming school year.

After the calendar of classes is developed each catechist could receive a copy of it, along with a Class Planning Schedule Form (located in Section 250). A schedule of classes should be filled out by each catechist as they plan their year. A copy of this Class Planning Schedule is to be kept on file in the religious education leader's office so that the leader will know what is being covered each week in each class. It is essential that there is uniformity in this requirement for all grades in the parish.

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OTHER CALENDARS TO CHECK - CHECKLIST

The development of the religious education calendar should be done in collaboration with other staff members who are responsible for scheduling within the parish and other groups who will also be scheduling events for parish children and youth. The completion of this calendar in May for the following year will alleviate most conflicts regarding parish space and other parish activities and eliminate as much as possible, conflicts with other groups.

The liturgical year calendar (liturgical seasons [Advent, Lent, etc.], holydays)

Local public school district calendar (multiple districts if necessary) for holidays & long weekends

Local public school district calendar of sporting events (playoffs, etc.)

Local public school district calendar of other events (plays, ring ceremonies, graduation, etc.)

Scheduled parish events such as festivals, devotions, bingo, etc.

Parochial school events if the parish has a school

Other ministry calendars of the parish (minister appreciation events, etc.)

Diocesan events (Conferences, Ministry Training Program, Youth events, CEO days etc.)

Local community calendar for events (Parades, Halloween times, Breakfast with Santa, etc.)

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EVENTS TO INCLUDE CHECKLIST

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION CALENDAR

Opening and closing of classes for the year

Each day classes will meet for the year

Major liturgical celebrations which include the whole program such as Advent, Christmas, Lent

Holidays - when classes end and resume

Student sacramental preparation dates (First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation)

Parent meetings for sacramental preparation

Service and community building or prayer activities that involve large groups of students

Snow make-up dates if necessary

Youth Rally Dates

GRADE LEVEL SPECIFIC CALENDAR

Class meeting dates

Dates of the grade level retreats

Dates for class sacramental experiences (class Masses, Reconciliation)

Dates for class service experiences (Crop Walk, etc.)

Dates for class community building activities

SAMPLE CALENDAR A - ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

SAMPLE ONLY - DO NOT COPY

Incorporate Student Retreats into the Calendar:

First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, Grade Level Retreats. These can be combined, as needed, depending on size of enrollment.

Sept. 15	Opening Day Liturgy and Meet the Teachers
Sept. 22	Class
Sept. 29	Class
Oct. 6	Class - Students write letters or cards to residents of a local nursing home.
Oct. 13	Class
Oct. 20	Class
Oct. 27	All Saints Prayer Service - all grades
Nov. 3	Class
Nov. 10	Class - Students bring in items for Thanksgiving Baskets for the poor of the community
Nov. 17	Class
Nov. 24	No Class Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 1	Class - Students write letters/cards for Christmas to nursing home residents.
Dec. 8	Holy Day Liturgy - all grades
Dec. 15	Class
Dec. 22	No Class Christmas Break
Dec. 29	No Class Christmas Break
Jan. 5	Epiphany Lesson and Celebration - all grades Celebrate the 12th Day of Christmas (Christmas celebrations will be held in the Christmas season - not in Advent))
Jan. 12	Class
Jan. 19	Class
Jan. 26	Class - Students make Valentine greetings for nursing home
Feb. 2	Lent - Prayer Service and Lesson - all grades. (Lenten Service Project)
Feb. 9	Class
Feb. 16	Class
Feb. 23	Class
March 2	Stations of the Cross - all grades
March 9	Class
March 16	Class
March 23	Class - Students make Easter/Spring greetings for nursing home
March 30	Class
Apr. 6	Holy Week Prayer Service
Apr. 13	Class
Apr. 20	Class
Apr. 27	Class
May 4	Class - Students write end of year letter to nursing home residents,
May 11	Class
May 18	Closing year liturgy and Party - all grades

SAMPLE CALENDAR B—JR. SR. HIGH GENERAL DISTRIBUTION CALENDAR SAMPLE ONLY, DO NOT COPY

Sept. 15 Opening Day Liturgy and Meet the Teachers

Sept. 22 Class

Sept. 29 Class

First Saturday of October - Borrow a Kid program

Oct. 6 Class

Oct. 13 Class - Social for youth - Hayride and bon-fire - (do not forget to plan prayer into the social)

Oct. 20 Class

Oct. 27 All Saints Prayer Service

First Saturday of November - Borrow a Kid program

Nov. 3 Class

Nov. 10 Class

Nov. 17 Class

Saturday before Thanksgiving youth help prepare Thanksgiving Baskets for the poor

Nov. 24 No Class Thanksgiving Break

First Saturday of December - Borrow a Kid program - perhaps decorate houses for Christmas.

Dec. 1 Class

Dec. 8 Holy Day Liturgy

Dec. 15 Class

Dec. 22 Christmas Break

Dec. 29 Christmas Break

First Saturday of January - Borrow a Kid program - perhaps take down Christmas decorations.

Jan. 5 Epiphany Lesson and Celebration of the 12 Days of Christmas

Jan 12 Class

Jan 19 Class

Jan 26 Class

First Saturday of February - Borrow a Kid program

Feb. 2 Lent - Prayer Service and Lesson .

Feb. 9 Class

Feb. 16 Class

Feb. 23 Class

First Saturday of March - Borrow a Kid program

Mar 2 Stations of the Cross - all grades

Mar 9 Class

Mar 16 Class

Mar 23 Class

Mar 30 Class

First Saturday of April - Borrow a Kid program

Apr. 6 Holy Week Prayer Service -

Apr. 13 Class

Apr. 20 Class

Apr. 27 Class

First Saturday of May - Borrow a Kid program - kids go out to help with work around the house or yard

May 4 Class

May 11 Class

May 18 Closing year liturgy and party.

Borrow a Kid Program
Youth go out to help elderly
and disabled with work

Suggestion: Offer a "Parents Day Out" the day after Thanksgiving. Parents drop off their children at the parish for a day of crafts, games, movies, fun and food, while they go out shopping. Could be offered in the evenings at different times through the course of the year

Suggestion: "New Years Eve" Lock-In and Party for your youth....ring in the new year with a prayer service. End the lock-in with the first morning mass on New Year's Day. Make it a theme party.

Suggestion for January: Have a movie and pizza night with a number of different movies and lots of pizza and movie foods.

End of February, consider a "Lock-In Food Fast" for the youth. Have the youth do service around the parish on Saturday and end the fast with Mass followed by dinner Saturday evening. Perfect opportunity to discuss Catholic Social Teaching.

Suggestion: a Seder Meal for your Youth and Parish

Suggestion: after a regular Sat. Eve liturgy, have dinner for the youth followed by an evening of games, music, movies and fun....Perfect time to have youth evaluate the year as well.