

**ELEMENTARY SERIES – FIRST RECONCILIATION and  
FIRST COMMUNION**  
**APPROVED SERIES**

*The following catechetical series is approved by the Diocesan Catechetical Committee for its content and correlation with the diocesan Curriculum Standards for Catechesis.*

*Please note that this series is not eligible for review by the USCCB’s Committee on the Catechism because catechetical content is contained in video format. When materials are not eligible for review by the USCCB, it is up to each diocese to determine if it is approved for use within the given diocese.*

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**I. GENERAL OVERVIEW:**

Blessed is comprised of two sacramental preparation programs, one for First Reconciliation and one for First Communion. It consists of 42 short videos (DVD and/or online), a Leader’s Guide, student workbook, and children’s prayer card for each sacrament.

**II. SPECIFIC STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:**

CATEGORY	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	COMMENT/EXPLANATION
<i>COMPATIBILITY WITH STANDARDS</i>	X		Good correlation to Curriculum Standards. A few items of clarification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session 2, Video 1 – Need to provide a better explanation of “adoration” as a type of prayer.</li> <li>• Session 3, Video 1 – Clarify that “liturgy” is not just the prayer of the people, but the work of God in which the people participate.</li> </ul>
<i>PRAYER TOOLS &amp; LITURGICAL TOOLS</i>	X	X	Each session has an opening and closing prayer. Weak in some areas of the liturgy: Session 3, Video 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows receiving Communion by the child taking from what looks like a bowl.</li> <li>• Use of guitar music at Mass.</li> <li>• Uses old version of the Gloria.</li> </ul>
<i>CATECHISM &amp; SCRIPTURE REFERENCE</i>	X	X	Does not contain quotes from the Catechism, but the material is based upon the content of the Catechism. Good use of Scripture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapted Scripture stories for children</li> <li>• Scripture quotes in Leader Guides</li> </ul>
<i>PARISH/SCHOOL COMPATIBILITY</i>	X		Same materials for both Parish and School. Need to figure out how to implement in each setting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could use entire series, but would have to fit it into the allotted time. Could use selected segments for Sacramental Prep.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	COMMENT/EXPLANATION
<i>FAMILY INVOLVEMENT</i>	X		The entire program is accessible to parents online for free. Audiobook for parents to listen to. E-mail program to allow parents to engage in the program alongside their children.
<i>TEACHER RESOURCES</i>	X		Leader Guide for each sacrament.
<i>ASSESSMENT TOOLS</i>	X		Quiz for each session.
<i>OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS</i>	X		Parent resources available (see above). Will be adding music to the program. No other student supplemental materials.
<i>ONLINE RESOURCES</i>	X		The entire program can be accessed online for free. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Videos</li> <li>E-books: Leader and Student Workbooks</li> </ul>
<i>DIVERSITY FOR THE LEARNER (LEARNING STYLES, CULTURE, ETC.)</i>	X	X	Good ethnic diversity in use of children's characters. Not much diversity of learning styles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sessions consist of videos, reading, animated artwork, and discussion. No other hands-on or kinesthetic activities.</li> </ul>
<i>APPEARANCE &amp; FORMAT</i>	X		Excellent, age-appropriate, engaging graphics. Beautiful animated artwork. High-quality animated videos.

### III. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

42 short animated files (DVD or online) for each – First Reconciliation and First Communion.

- 1 to 15 minutes each

Suggested 6 sessions for each sacrament

- 60 -90 minutes per session – can be shortened or lengthened, depending upon amount of time

Session Format

- Opening Prayer
- Teachable Moments (episodes 2,3, 4, 6)
- From the Bible (episode 5)

4. Show what you know: quiz
  5. Journal with Jesus: write or draw their thoughts to Jesus
  6. Closing Prayer
- Focuses on emotional connection through animation.
  - Does a great job of drawing students into the meaning of the sacraments, such as encouraging reverent behavior and helping the students enter into the liturgy.
  - Presented in a practical way, with good application to life.
  
  - Good quality videos and beautiful animated artwork in workbooks. However, also contains a lot of reading.
    - Dialogue in the videos is almost directly from the textbook.
    - Teachers may need to find ways to include activities for other types of learning styles.
  
  - With the use of animation, some things may need to be clarified, such as:
    - With the use of animal personifications, students may need to be reminded that animals cannot be baptized, commit sins, etc.
    - Session 3, Video 6 – Children go into a dark tunnel without parent permission. May need to clarify safety precautions.
  
  - The material is based on solid Church teaching; however, the publisher uses some unique terminology, such as “become the best version of yourself” instead of “become holy.”