The Diocese of Duluth’s
Adaptation of the

ADAPTATION OF

Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age

FOR USE IN PARISH AND YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis
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PREAMBLE

The heart of catechesis is the explicit invitation of Jesus to "Come, Follow Me," addressed to the young man in the Gospel (Matthew 19: 16-22; GDC, no.183). This essentially Christological character of catechesis permeates the Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age published in 2008. The content and order of the Curriculum Framework extends this direct invitation of Christ to youth. It expresses the meaning of Saint Paul's words to the Corinthians, "I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received" (1 Corinthians 15:3).

The Curriculum Framework is designed to provide systematic content to guide the catechetical formation of young people of high school age in the various catechetical contexts in which it takes place. In particular, this Adaptation is now offered to guide the use of the Curriculum Framework in parish religious education programs, and in catechetical formation that is a constitutive part of youth ministry programs. It presents a condensed outline of the six core themes of the Curriculum Framework.1

A Point of Reference

Like the Curriculum Framework, this Adaptation is not a tool for direct instruction. Both are offered by the Bishops primarily as a point of reference for the work of catechetical publishers. The creativity of writers, editors and catechetical publishers who take into account the pastoral experience of catechists and youth ministers will shape catechetical materials and programs based on this Adaptation. A Curriculum Framework model aims to encourage and support, rather than limit, the creativity of publishers and catechists in the creation and use of catechetical materials and programs derived from it.

The Church, in transmitting the faith, "does not have a particular method nor any single method," and the "variety of methods is a sign of life and richness" as well as a demonstration of respect for those to whom catechesis is addressed (GDC 148). Therefore catechetical materials and programs shaped by this adaptation of the Curriculum Framework will, of necessity, include specific elements of sacramental catechesis, spirituality, retreats, family prayer, popular piety, devotions, and works of charity and justice. Publishers will also take into consideration methodological approaches suitable for youth catechesis and the formation of catechists and youth ministers.

Catechetical Content and Method in a Divine and Human Pedagogy

The Curriculum Framework and its adaptation for parish religious education and youth ministry programs assume the "Pedagogy of God"2 as a vital starting point for catechetical formation of high school age students. God has revealed Himself and His message gradually over an extended period of time using human means and experiences in what is called a "Divine Pedagogy." In the life and teaching of His Son, Jesus Christ, this Divine Revelation reaches its fullness in time (Hebrews 1: 1-2).

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1 In addition, a brief list of Protocol items that supplement the six core themes is included. The Protocol is an evaluative instrument used in the review of catechetical materials for conformity to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It may be found at www.usccb.org/catechism/document/protocol.shtml

Catechesis of youth is "radically inspired by the Pedagogy of God, as revealed in Christ and in the Church" (GDC 143). "The wonderful dialogue that God undertakes with every human person becomes the inspiration and norm" of the ministry of the catechist and youth minister, as noted in the General Directory for Catechesis (GDC 144).

Following the "Divine Pedagogy," the Curriculum Framework and this adaptation affirm a vital correlation and interdependence, between doctrinal content and catechetical method, rather than a separation or opposition between them. In other words, the Curriculum Framework and this adaptation accept both content and methodology as constitutive elements in the ministry of catechists and youth ministers. The catechist "conducts a pedagogy of signs, where words and deeds, teaching and experience are interlinked" (GDC, 143), and belief is understood as an "ecclesial act of faith" in which the Church's faith "precedes, engenders, supports, and nourishes our faith" (CCC 181).

The content of all catechesis, including that of youth, is derived from Divine Revelation received through Sacred Scripture and Tradition. The sequence of the Curriculum Framework and this adaptation follows this "Divine Pedagogy," and the unfolding of Revelation in the New Testament. To the extent that catechetical methods serve the content of Revelation they communicate the living mystery of God and invite a personal encounter with Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

As writers, editors and publishers create catechetical materials and programs based on the Curriculum Framework and this adaptation they give expression to the "Divine Pedagogy" through a variety of catechetical methods related to the real life experience of youth and the challenges and opportunities from contemporary culture.

The Parish and the Family in the Catechetical Formation of Youth

The parish is, without doubt, the most important locus in which the Christian community is formed and expressed (GDC 257). The parish remains the "prime mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis, (CT 67) together with "family catechesis that precedes, accompanies and enriches all forms of catechesis" (GDC 226). The Curriculum Framework and this adaptation, while primarily prepared for publishers, will also assist all whose catechetical ministry engages youth in the parish and in the family.

The effective and successful formation of youth through the use of the Curriculum Framework and this adaptation will depend on the creative work of authors, editors and publishers of catechetical materials and programs derived from it. Those who are to benefit from the publishers' implementation of the Curriculum Framework and its adaptation include Bishops, pastors, catechetical leaders, catechists, youth ministers, parents and scholars. Together all involved in the catechetical formation of youth in parish religious education programs and youth ministry programs extend to young people the invitation of Christ to accept the life-giving message of the Gospel, and to Christian discipleship and witness in the midst of contemporary culture.
I. The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

A. The thirst and desire for God (CCC, 27-30, 44-45, 1718)

1. Human beings have a longing for God.
2. That longing itself is from God who desires and initiates a relationship with each person.
3. Only in God can lasting joy and peace be found in this life and in the next.

B. God revealed in many ways

1. Natural Revelation as attested to in Sacred Scripture (CCC, 32-38; 46-47)
2. Divine Revelation (CCC, 50-53, 68-69; 230)
   a. Definition/meaning (CCC, 50-53, 68-69)
   b. Events of God's Revelation in history are recorded in Sacred Scripture, God's inspired word (CCC, 54-64, 70-72)
   c. Jesus Christ, the definitive Word of Revelation, the One to whom all Scripture bears witness, is God's only Son (CCC, 65-67, 73, 101-104, 134, 423)
3. The transmission of Divine Revelation (CCC, 74-95)
   a. Tradition and Scripture (CCC, 74-83, 96-97)
   b. Deposit of Faith given to the Church (CCC, 84-95, 98-100)
4. Sacred Scripture, God's inspired word (CCC, 105-137)
   a. Divine Inspiration
      1) Inspiration is the gift of the Holy Spirit by which a human author was able to write a biblical book which really has God as the author and which teaches faithfully and
without error the saving truth that God willed to be consigned to us for our salvation (CCC 105, 135).

2) Since God inspired the biblical writers, he is the author of Scripture (CCC 105-106, 136).

3) Because the human authors needed to use the language and thinking of their time, we need to study the conditions and use of language in the context of their time and understand what they intended to communicate, remembering that these human authors might not have been conscious of the deeper implications of what God wanted to communicate (CCC 106, 108-114).

4) The Bible is inerrant in matters of Revelation and faith: because God is the author of Scripture, concerning our salvation are true; this attribute is called “inerrancy” (see DV, no. 11; CCC 107).

b. The Scriptures develop through oral tradition (CCC, 76, 126), written books (CCC, 106), and the setting of the canon of Scripture (CCC, 120)

c. Sacred Scripture and the life of the Church (CCC, 131, 133, 141, 1190)

d. Scripture and prayer (CCC, 103, 1096, 1100, 1176-1177, 1184, 1190, 1349, 2662)

1) Scripture at Mass and other liturgies (CCC 103, 1096, 1100, 1184, 1190, 1349).

2) The psalms and the Our Father are biblical prayers shared by all Christians (CCC 2585ff., 2759ff.).

3) Lectio divina: a meditative, prayerful approach to Scripture (CCC 1177, 2708).

4) Scripture as basis for individual prayer and for prayer within small Christian communities and other parish, school, or local gatherings (CCC 2653-2654).

e. The authentic interpretation of Scripture is the responsibility of the teaching office of the Church (CCC, 85-87, 100)

f. The Old Testament (CCC, 121-123, 138)

1) This is the name given to the forty-six books which make up the first part of the Bible and record salvation history prior to the coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ (CCC 120).

   a) Many Protestant Bibles have only thirty-nine books in the Old Testament; other Protestant Bibles contain the additional seven, referring to them as “deuterocanonical.”

   b) Catholics rely on the Greek version of the Old Testament for their Bible, while Protestants tend to rely on a Hebrew version.

2) It is called the “Old” Testament because it relates God’s teaching and actions prior to the coming of Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of Revelation. It also focuses on the covenant God made with the Jewish people, which is called the “Old Covenant” to distinguish it from the New Covenant made by Jesus Christ (CCC 121-123).

3) The Old Testament contains the Pentateuch, the Historical books, the Wisdom books, and the Prophetic books.
g. The New Testament (CCC, 120, 124-127)

1) This is the name given to those twenty-seven books which compose the second part of the Bible and which focus on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and some writings of the early Church.


3) The Gospels (CCC, 125, 126, 139, 512-667)

   a) The Gospels occupy the central place in Scripture (CCC 125, 139).
   b) They proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the definitive Revelation of God.
   c) The Gospels contain a record of the life of Jesus Christ and of his teachings and redeeming work.
   d) The Gospels lead us to accept Jesus Christ in faith and apply his teachings to our lives.


Challenges (Apologetics)

A. Is it true that Catholics do not use or read the Bible?

   1. No. Catholics use the Bible regularly. The Bible or Scripture is an integral part of Catholic prayer life, forming part of every Mass, every sacramental celebration, and the official daily prayer of the Church—the Liturgy of the Hours (CCC 141, 1190).

   2. The Church urges Catholics to use the Bible in personal prayer (CCC 2653-2654).

   3. Scripture study and prayer groups using Scripture are a common part of parish life.

   4. In the fourth century, St. Jerome said that “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”; this underlines the importance of Scripture in the life of the Church (CCC 133).

B. Isn’t the Bible just another piece of literature?

   1. No. While Scripture contains various types of literary forms and genres, it is more than just literature. It is the inspired Word of God (CCC 135).

   2. Since it is not just another piece of literature, Scripture cannot be either read or understood merely in the same way as other literature (CCC 108).

   3. Scripture always needs to be read or interpreted in the light of the Holy Spirit and under the direction of the Church (CCC 100, 111, 119, 137).

C. Is the Bible always literally true?

   1. It depends on what one means by “literally.” The Church does not always propose a literalist or fundamentalist approach to Scripture but rather a contextualist approach. The Church teaches that all of Scripture is true on matters pertaining to religious and salvific teaching because it is inspired by God for that purpose (CCC 107, 116).

   2. The Bible has a definite historic basis for events recounted in both the Old and the New Testaments; the Church particularly upholds the historicity of the Gospels (CCC 126). However, the Church does not claim that the Bible’s purpose is to present scientific or historical facts (CCC
3. The Church gives guidelines for interpretation of Sacred Scripture (see earlier in outline).

D. Isn’t the Bible about the past? Why do people today think it applies to them?

1. While the Bible contains history, stories, and teaching about events in the past, Scripture is the living Word of God. While the content is rooted in particular moments in history, the message is timeless and universal.

2. God continues to speak to us through Scripture; this is why the liturgies of the Church always contain Scripture and why personal prayer focused on Scripture is vital.

E. Why do Catholics maintain beliefs and practices that are not in the Bible?

1. The Bible is not the sole means that God chose to hand on the truths of Revelation. Scripture and Tradition are the two complementary ways Revelation is passed down (CCC 80, 97).

2. There are teachings that come through Tradition that are not explicitly found in Scripture. However, nothing taught through Tradition ever contradicts Scripture since both come from Christ through the Apostles (CCC 82).

3. Apostolic Tradition refers to those things that Jesus taught to the Apostles and early disciples, which were passed down to us at first by word of mouth and were only written down later. We identify these beliefs as coming from Tradition and understand that this Tradition is part of God’s Revelation to us (CCC 83).

F. Why do some people try to change what the Church teaches about Jesus Christ?

1. People have tried to change teaching about Christ for many different reasons. Sometimes it is to justify their particular belief or lack of belief. Sometimes it has been out of sincere but misguided or misinformed efforts to try to explain mysteries about Jesus Christ or God’s Revelation.

2. In the early history of the Church, there were a number of heresies about Jesus Christ which arose when people tried to explain the mystery of who he was and is. An example of this is the Arian heresy, which denied the full divinity of Christ.

3. Sometimes people did not like what Jesus taught or did or what happened to him. There were a number of “gospels” written, which the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognized as not authentic. Some of these gospels shied away from teaching the Incarnation, suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

4. In modern times, there are individuals and groups who try to explain in natural scientific terms the miracles of Jesus, thus undermining his divinity.
II. Who is Jesus Christ?

A. Revelation is God's gift of himself (CCC, 50-73, 230-231)

1. The divine plan of salvation is disclosed in salvation history

   a. Definitions/meanings.
   b. Scripture is the inspired record of God's Revelation in history.
   c. Tradition is the living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church.

B. The response to Revelation on the part of the human person is faith (CCC, 143-144, 153-165, 176-183, 229)

1. What is faith in general (CCC 143-144, 153-165)?
   a. A grace that enables an assent of mind, heart, and will (CCC 143).
   b. Willingness to believe and trust in what God has communicated to us.
   c. Relationship with God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (CCC 150-152).

2. Grace enables faith (CCC, 143, 179)

3. Faith in Jesus Christ leads to discipleship (CCC, 229, 520, 546, 562, 654, 1533)
   a. Recognition and acceptance of him as the Son of God who died to save us from our sins (CCC 1248).
   b. Willingness to believe and trust in what Jesus has taught us about the Triune God, about ourselves, and about how to live (CCC 915, 1693, 1816, 1823, 1986, 2262, 2347, 2427, 2466, 2612).
   c. This faith has practical implications for daily life and one’s relationship with Christ (CCC 908).
   d. Involves active participation in the Church community and working to spread the faith by word and example.

4. The fullness of Revelation, Jesus Christ himself, is reflected in the life and teaching of the Catholic Church (CCC, 748-870)
   a. The Church was founded by Jesus Christ (CCC 811-812).
   b. Church is the Body of Christ in the world.
   c. The Church is a unity of one faith in one Lord through one Baptism (CCC 813-16).
   d. The Magisterium guards and hands on the deposit of faith and is entrusted with the authentic interpretation of Revelation (CCC, 880-896)

C. Jesus Christ's Revelation about God

1. The Mystery of the Incarnation
   a. Jesus is the Son of God from all eternity and Son of Mary from the moment of the Incarnation (CCC, 454, 486-487, 496, 501, 721-730)
   b. Jesus is fully God and fully man (CCC, 464-469, 479-483)
      1) Jesus Christ, a Divine Person, is truly the Son of God, who, without ceasing to be God and Lord, became man and our brother (CCC 469).
      2) Jesus Christ took on a human nature. The eternal Son of God incarnate worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a
human heart he loved. He was like us in all things except sin (CCC 470). Man’s creator has become man (CCC 526).

c. Unique role of Mary, Mother of God and Ever-Virgin (CCC, 484-487, 495, 499-507, 508-510)

2. The revelation of Jesus about God (Jn 14:9)
   a. God is Trinity: One God in three Divine Persons (CCC, 234, 261, 267)
      1) God the Father (CCC, 238-242)
         a) God is Father to all those baptized as his adopted sons and daughters through and in the Son (CCC 232-233, 249).
         b) God the Father of mercy also cares for the unbaptized (CCC 1257, 1260-1261).
      2) God the Son (CCC, 252, 422, 430, 456-469, 484-487)
         a) Jesus Christ is eternally begotten and incarnate in time (CCC 461, 422).
         b) Son of God, true God, consubstantial with the Father (CCC 252).
         c) Son of Mary, true man; the perfection of who we are created to be (CCC 430, 456-469, 484-487).
         d) Savior and Redeemer (CCC 517, 651-658).
      3) God the Holy Spirit (CCC, 243-248)
         a) Eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son (CCC 687).
         b) Sanctifier of the Church and her members, e.g., gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit (CCC, nos. 32, 731-741, 1830-1832).
   b. Development of Trinitarian Theology in the early Councils of the Church (CCC, 245-248)

D. Jesus Christ teaches us about ourselves

1. The human person is created in the image and likeness of God. (CCC, 381, 1700-1709)
   This means we are endowed with special gifts which reflect God: immortality, intellect, free will, the ability to love. (CCC, 356-358, 1702-1706, 1745)

2. The Incarnation affirms that we are created as good, but in need of salvation, and are meant for eternal glory with God. The Incarnation also describes how God continues to work out our sanctification in the world, e.g., Church, sacraments, priesthood (CCC 461-469).

3. God has entrusted his creation to us; we are stewards charged with procreating and protecting life and using the rest of creation respectfully (CCC 287, 354).

4. Jesus Christ redeems us and gives us his grace so that we can choose the good according to God’s will and resist sin and its effects. (CCC, 1705, 1708-1709)
a. Jesus invites us to believe in him, to invite him into our hearts, and to follow him and his teaching as the path that leads to life, for he is “the way, the truth, and the life” and is worthy of our belief, adoration, and love (CCC 1741-1742).
b. He reveals the way to repentance and conversion, teaching us to leave sin behind and to live a new life in him; he gives us the spiritual power and grace to overcome evil; he also teaches us about God’s forgiveness (CCC 1847-1848).
c. He teaches us how to be single-hearted in our desire for God, to offset the disordered affections and divided hearts with which we live (CCC 1716-1717).

5. Jesus Christ reveals the Father to us (CCC, 2798)
   a. By becoming man, and by his Death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ unites us to God (CCC 461-464).
   b. We become the free adopted children of the Father through Baptism (Gal 4; CCC 1265-1270).
   c. We are conformed to Christ and can grow in holiness and goodness.
      1) Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7; CCC 1716-1724).
      2) Parables and other teaching of Jesus Christ (CCC 546).
      3) “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mk 10:17-22).
      4) The Two Great Commandments: love of God and love of neighbor (CCC 2083-2557).
      5) Teaching about the final judgment (Mt 25:31-46; CCC 544, 1033, 1373, 2447,2831).

6. Jesus Christ teaches us to pray (CCC, 2680, 2774-2776, 2798-2900, 2857)
   a. In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus teaches us about prayer:
      1) Going off by himself to pray teaches us the importance of finding time for prayer (Mk 1:35, 6:46; Lk 5:16).
      2) Jesus Christ teaches his Apostles and disciples to pray (Mt 7:7-11; CCC 2609).
      3) The Lord Jesus teaches the importance of perseverance in prayer (Lk 11:5-13, 18:1-8; CCC 2729-2737, 2742-2745).
   b. Jesus Christ teaches us through prayer:
      1) The Lord Jesus teaches us to approach prayer with humility and a sense of need (Lk 18:9-14).
      2) God is our Father, whom we approach through prayer (Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4; CCC 2759ff.).
      3) Jesus Christ intercedes for us (Jn 14:13, 16:24; CCC 2665-2669).

7. Jesus sends out his disciples to evangelize (Lk 10:1-20; Mt 28:16-20; CCC 861, 905).

8. Jesus Christ tells us of the goal of this life
   a. The Communion of Saints (CCC 948, 957, 960, 1474).
   b. Four Last Things (CCC, 677-679, 992, 996, 1010-1019, 1021-1041, 1051-1060)
      1) Death (CCC 992, 996, 1007, 1010-1014, 2299).
         a) Purgatory (CCC 1030-1032).
      3) Heaven (CCC 1023-1029).
      4) Hell (CCC 1033-1037,051-1060).

Challenges (Apologetics)
A. How can we know God really exists?
   1. Even without the Bible and Divine Revelation, we can know God really exists through reason and
through experience (CCC 36-39, 50, 156-159).

2. By looking around at creation, reason and experience can point to God’s existence (CCC 156-159).
   a. The order and beauty of the natural world point to God as the origin and Creator of the universe (CCC 295).
   b. Creation did not happen by chance; throughout history the Church has taught that someone had to be behind it, and that someone is God (CCC 156, 295).
   c. The natural law written upon each person’s heart and the longing for God that each person has also point to God’s existence (CCC 1954-1960).

3. Reason and experience can also teach us to accept the word of other believers (CCC 39).
   b. The testimony and witness of others who have gone before us: people whose stories appear in the Bible; Apostles, saints, and martyrs (CCC 823, 828, 857, 946, 1258, 2473).
   c. The faith of people we know today: the pope and the bishops in union with him; priests and deacons; parents, grandparents, and other family members; teachers and catechists; the witness of fellow Catholics as well as the witness of non-Catholic believers (CCC 85, 1655-1658).

4. We can also know God exists through faith. For those who do believe, through faith as well as prayer and grace, they can grow in the knowledge and experience of the reality of God and his existence (CCC 143, 153-159).

B. There are some who see human suffering and conclude that God does not care about us. Why do we say that he loves us deeply (CCC 1503-1505, 1681, 1808)?

1. We say God loves us deeply, even in the midst of suffering, because he reveals his love to us in many ways, especially in Christ’s taking our suffering upon himself for our sake (CCC 1505).
   a. He shows us his love in creation (CCC 54).
      1) God created the world entirely out of love and not out of necessity (CCC 295).
      2) God created human beings in his image and likeness with the ability to give and receive love (CCC 1700-1706).
   b. The suffering and Death of Jesus Christ shows and proves that love (CCC 599-623).
      1) God sent his Son to redeem everyone from sin so that all can share a life of love eternally with him (Jn 3:16-17; CCC 599-605).
      2) Jesus lives now and establishes a relationship with each and every one of us, particularly through the sacramental life of the Church (CCC 662-664, 1084-1090).
      3) God continually calls us to union with him in his Son through the Holy Spirit by means of a life of holiness (CCC 1091-1109).
   c. God helps us know and sense his love through the people and events of our lives (CCC 897-913, 1069).

2. We also know of his love because he tells us of his loving plan to save us.
   a. He tells us in Scripture, the living Word of God (CCC 80-82).
   b. He also tells us through the liturgy of the Church, speaking to us in the Scripture and giving himself to us in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist (CCC 1067, 1324-1327).
   c. He tells us through the Church (CCC 785-786).

C. How can people say that God is good if suffering and evil are present in the world?

1. Suffering that exists in the world is not something caused by God or sent by God; God only brings about what is good for he is goodness itself. When there is evil and suffering, God does not cause it, but sometimes he does permit it for reasons we cannot now know or understand (CCC 1500-1501).

2. Evil is a reality and a mystery, that is, it is hard to understand the why of it (CCC 309-314).

Some evil and suffering are a result of the work of the Devil or Satan (CCC 395).

3. Some suffering is the result of human sin and is not from God. It was God who gave us free will; sin is the result of the misuse of this gift (CCC 1849, 1852-1853).
4. The Passion and Death of Jesus can help us to see beyond suffering and remind us that God is present with us in our suffering, pain, and death; our own personal suffering when united to Jesus’ suffering becomes redemptive for ourselves and others (CCC 1851).

5. The Scriptures try to help us understand suffering: the psalms, the story of Job, and the prophets offer insights and consolation. In particular, the Resurrection of Jesus can help us see beyond suffering to hope and to eternal life (CCC 638–655).

6. We need to remember that God always wants what is best for us (CCC 374–379).

7. Natural disasters can be understood in part as a result of Original Sin (CCC 400) and also because the world is in a state of journeying toward ultimate perfection (CCC 310); they are not signs of God’s displeasure or punishment.

D. Does God really want us to be happy?

1. Yes. From the beginning of Creation, God has created us to be happy both in this world and in the next and has shown us the ways to be truly happy. Unhappiness was caused by people themselves when they did not or would not listen to him (CCC 374-379).

2. God sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, so that we might be saved (Jn 3:16); that confident hope is the cause for happiness in spite of suffering (CCC 599-605).

3. Jesus Christ taught us all he did so that we might share in his joy (Jn 15:11), which shows us again his desire for our happiness (CCC 736, 1832).

4. The blueprint for true discipleship and happiness is found in Christ’s teaching of the Beatitudes (Mt 5:2-10; CCC 1716-1718).

5. True joy is the mark of followers of Christ (Phil 4:4; CCC 1832).

6. Jesus established his Church to help people find true happiness and joy (CCC 1832).

E. There are some who dismiss God’s Revelation and say that the beliefs and doctrines taught by the Church have been made up by members of the Church. How can we be sure that what the Catholic Church teaches has come from God?

1. We can be sure that what the Church teaches has come from God because of Apostolic Tradition and Apostolic Succession (CCC 888-892, 861-862, 858-860).
   a. What was revealed in and through Jesus Christ was entrusted to St. Peter and the Apostles, who were taught directly by Jesus. They in turn passed on those beliefs through those who succeeded them (CCC 81, 84).
   b. Through the centuries, the popes and bishops, the successors of St. Peter and the Apostles, have carefully transmitted to the generations whom they shepherd the truths revealed and taught by Jesus Christ (CCC 96, 171, 173, 815).
   c. Jesus Christ promised his Apostles that he would be with the Church until the end of time (Mt 28:20).

2. Christ has also given the Church a share in his own infallibility (CCC 889-892).

F. How do we as Catholics answer questions about the Blessed Virgin Mary and her role in the life and prayer of the Church (CCC 148, 484-511, 721-726, 773, 963-972, 829)?

1. Questions about why Catholics pray to Mary.
   a. Catholics do not worship Mary; worship belongs to God alone. They venerate Mary and the saints.
   b. Mary does not have the power to answer prayers on her own; God alone has that power.
   c. Prayers to Mary are asking for her intercessory help.
      1) Since Mary is already in Heaven, she will know better than we how to offer praise and prayer to God.
      2) When people pray to the Blessed Mother they are asking her in turn to offer the same prayer for them to God.
      3) When Mary and the saints were on earth, they cooperated with God to do good for others; so now from their place in Heaven they continue to cooperate with God by doing good for
others who are in need on earth and in Purgatory.

2. Questions about references in the Gospels to the brothers and sisters of Jesus.
   a. From the earliest days of the Church, Mary has been revered as ever-virgin; she was a virgin before Jesus' birth and remained a virgin afterward.
   b. It is not clear who the “brothers and sisters” of Jesus are.
      1) At the time Jesus lived, the designation “brother and sister” also referred to cousins and sometimes even close neighbors.
III. The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery)

A. The Creation of the world and of our first parents (CCC, 54, 279-282, 315, 319, 353)

1. Understanding literary forms in Scripture (CCC, 289)
   b. The book reveals truth about which science and history can only speculate.
   c. Scripture’s use of figurative and symbolic language in Genesis 1–11 (CCC 362, 375, 390, 396).

2. The Trinitarian God is the Creator of all that is; all creation reflects the glory of God. (CCC, 290-295, 301, 316-317, 320, 350)

3. Human beings are the summit of creation, made in the image and likeness of God (CCC, 356-359, 381-384, 1700-1706, 2331)
   a. God made them male and female (CCC 369-373, 1605, 1702, 2331).
   b. Dignity of both men and women: similarities and differences (CCC 2333-2336).
   c. Human persons are a union of body and soul and possess inviolable dignity (CCC, 356-368, 2334)

4. God’s plan: original holiness and original justice (CCC 374-379).

B. The Fall from grace: Original Sin (Rom 5:12, Gen 3; CCC, 55, 309-31, 324, 385-390, 1707)

1. The full meaning of the doctrine of Original Sin is revealed only in the light of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus. It is essential to belief in the mystery of Christ. The whole of human history is marked by the sin of the first parents (CCC 1708).

2. The fall of the angels (CCC, 391-395)

3. The rebellion of Adam and Eve was a sin of disobedience toward God and a rejection of a God-centered life and the choice of a self-centered life (CCC, 396-401, 415)

4. Consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin: loss of paradise, original grace, original holiness and original justice (CCC, 399-409, 416-419)

5. Original Sin and its consequences for all: suffering, death, a tendency toward sin, need for salvation (CCC 402-409).

C. God promises to send a Savior in the Proto-Evangelium (Gen 3:15; CCC, 410-412)

1. God’s covenants of the Old Testament (CCC, 121-123)
   a. The covenants are solemn commitments between God and human beings (CCC 56).
   b. God made a covenant with Noah, with Abraham, and with Moses (CCC 56-64).
   c. Each of these covenants foreshadows the Paschal Mystery (CCC 129).

2. The promise fulfilled in Jesus (CCC, 422-455, 592)
   a. The Annunciation (CCC, 484-489, 744)

   b. Why the Word became flesh (the Incarnation)(CCC 525-528, 456-478).
   1) To save us by reconciling us with God, who loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins (CCC 457).
2) That we might come to know the depth of God’s love for us (CCC 458).
3) To be our model of holiness (CCC 459).
4) To make us partakers of the divine nature (CCC 457-460).
5) To destroy the power of the Devil (1 Jn 3:8).

c. Christ’s whole life was a mystery of redemption (CCC, 535-618)
   1) By becoming poor he enriched us with his poverty.
   2) In his hidden life his obedience atoned for our disobedience.
   3) In his preached word he purified our consciences.
   4) In his compassion and in his healings and exorcisms he bore our infirmities.
   5) In his Cross and Resurrection he justified us (CCC 517).

d. Redemption through the Paschal Mystery (CCC, 595-618, 620-621, 629, 637)
   1) The Passion and Death of Jesus (CCC 595-618).
      a) The mystery of redemptive love and suffering on the cross.
         i) Overcoming temptation by Satan.
         ii) Events of the Passion . . . the Suffering Servant.
         iii) Philippians 2:5-11.
   2) The Resurrection of Jesus: Redemption accomplished and the promise fulfilled (CCC, 631-658)
      a) A historical event involving Christ’s physical body.
         i) Testified to by those who saw the Risen Jesus.
         ii) Verified by the empty tomb.
      b) A transcendent event in which Jesus is no longer bound by space and time.
         i) The Resurrection is not a resuscitation or a return to earthly life.
      c) The significance of Christ’s Resurrection.
         i) Confirmation of Jesus’ divinity and of his words and teachings (CCC 651, 653).
         ii) Fulfillment of the promises in the Old Testament and of Jesus’ earthly promises (CCC 652).
         iii) A promise of our own resurrection (1 Cor 15).
      d) We participate in the mystery of redemption through the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Holy Eucharist.

f. The Ascension and glorification of Jesus culminating in the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (CCC, 659-667, 1112)
   1) The Ascension marks the entrance of Jesus’ humanity into heaven (CCC 659).
   2) Jesus’ promise to be with us forever (Mt 28:20); the sending of the Holy Spirit as part of the promise.
   3) Where Jesus has gone, we hope to follow; Mary, through her Assumption into heaven body and soul, is an anticipation of the resurrection of others who will follow (CCC 963-970).
3. Call to holiness and living as a disciple of Jesus (CCC, 826, 2012-2014, 2028, 2045, 2813)

a. Christ was put to death for our sins and was raised for our justification (Rom 4:25; CCC 598).
   1) Eternal life with God in heaven is God’s desire for us (CCC 1691-1698).
   2) We need to accept and live the grace of redemption (CCC 1803).
      a) By practicing the virtues of faith, hope, and love (CCC 1812-1832).
      b) By praying for the coming of the Kingdom of God and by working toward that goal.
   3) Death and our judgment by God (CCC 678-679, 1006-1014).
      a) Immediate or particular judgment (CCC1021).
      b) The resurrection of the body and the Last Judgment (CCC 988-1004).
      c) Heaven, hell, purgatory (CCC 1023-1037).

b. Holy Spirit and grace enable us to live a holy life (CCC, 1704)

c. Life of worship, prayer, service to the poor (CCC, 618, 767, 2558, 2590-2591, 2644-2645, 2661-2662, 2693-2694, 2720-2721, 2757)

1) Living as a disciple of Jesus.
   a) Adherence to Jesus and acceptance of his teaching (CCC 520, 618, 767, 1693).
   b) Conversion of heart and life, and the formation of conscience (CCC 1248).
   c) Worshipping and loving God as Jesus taught (CCC 618, 767).
   e) Putting Jesus’ moral and spiritual teaching into practice.
   f) Serving the poor and marginalized.
   g) Fulfilling responsibility for the mission of evangelization.
   h) Fulfilling responsibility for stewardship.

2) Prayer in the Life of a Believer
   a) God calls every individual to a vital relationship with him experienced in prayer (CCC 2558).
   b) Developing intimacy and communion with Jesus Christ through prayer is an essential aspect in the life of a believer or disciple (CT, no. 5; GDC, no. 80; NDC, §19B; CCC 2560).
   c) Scripture is a source and guide for prayer (CCC 2567-2589, 2653-2654).
   d) Expressions of prayer can be vocal, meditative, or contemplative (CCC 2700-2724).
   e) The forms of prayer are blessing, adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise (CCC 2626-2649).
   f) Prayer requires effort and commitment (CCC 2729-2745).
   g) The Lord’s Prayer forms a basis for the Church’s understanding of the value of prayer (CCC 2759-2865).
Challenges (Apologetics)

A. Why would God the Father allow his Son, Jesus, to suffer and die the way he did (CCC 599-609)?

1. God the Father allowed Jesus Christ, his Son, to suffer and die the way he did because of his love for all human beings; in that love, he wants us to live eternally with him in heaven. His Passion reveals the depth of the Father’s love in helping all people to not be overcome by the magnitude of evil, sin, and death.

2. Because of Adam and Eve’s sin, all human beings are born with a wounded human nature due to the absence of the life of Christ’s grace, and so we could not live eternally with God unless we were redeemed (CCC 402-406).

3. God the Father allowed his Son, Jesus, to suffer and die because Jesus’ sacrifice destroyed the power of sin and restored us to friendship with God.

4. In part, the Father allowed Jesus to suffer and die the way he did in order to show us the gravity and seriousness of sin.

B. Why are followers of Jesus Christ sometimes so willing to make sacrifices and to accept pain and suffering, especially in witness to Christ and their faith?

1. Christians are willing to make sacrifices and undergo suffering patiently for a number of reasons.
   a. They are following the example of Jesus Christ, who through his suffering and Death gained salvation for us (CCC 1505).
   b. Jesus Christ also predicted that people would suffer for their faith and promised that he would be with them in their suffering. Knowing this, believers try to accept suffering patiently, to trust in God, and to pray for his grace to sustain them. They rely on the Holy Spirit’s gift of fortitude to grow in the virtue of fortitude (CCC 1808, 1831).
   c. Followers of Jesus Christ know that suffering is never in vain because it can help one move toward Heaven and eternal life. In our suffering, we can help make up to some degree for the hurt and harm we cause by our sin.
   d. Finally, the suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus teaches us to look beyond the sufferings of this world to the promise of eternal life with God in heaven (CCC 1521).

2. Christ strengthens the person to undergo suffering and thereby become more like Christ himself. Our suffering, when united with his own, can become a means of purification and of salvation for us and for others (CCC 618, 1505).

C. Isn’t making sacrifices and putting up with suffering a sign of weakness (CCC 1808, 1831)?

1. No. Making sacrifices and putting up with suffering requires a great deal of courage and strength. Jesus teaches us, by example, about the value of unselfish living and the courage and strength that requires. It takes grace and personal holiness to live as Jesus Christ has taught us.

2. Jesus shows us through the whole Paschal Mystery (suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension) that giving of ourselves is the path to eternal life and happiness (CCC 571-655).

3. He gives us the example of accepting the Father’s will even when it involves suffering.

4. Jesus teaches us both in word and by example to refrain from revenge and to forgive those who hurt or sin against us (CCC 2842-2845).

5. Suffering is necessary to develop our maturity in Christ and to love our neighbor as Christ loves him (Col 1:24; CCC 1808, 1831).

D. In the end, isn’t it really only the final result that matters?

1. No. Every moral choice that a person makes has an effect on the person and society (CCC 1749-1756).

2. A good end never justifies an evil means (CCC 1753).

3. One must never do evil just so that good may come of it (CCC 1789).
IV. Jesus Christ's Mission Continues in the Church

Help the students understand that in and through the Church they encounter the living Jesus Christ. They will be introduced to the fact that the Church was founded by Christ through the Apostles and is sustained by him through the Holy Spirit. The students will come to know that the Church is the living Body of Christ today. This Body has both divine and human elements. Students will learn not so much about events in the life of the Church but about the sacred nature of the Church.

Christ Established His One Church to Continue His Presence and His Work

A. The Origin, Foundation and Manifestation of the Church (CCC, 777-779)
   1. The Catholic Church instituted by Christ (CCC, 748-766)
      a. Christ inaugurated the Church by preaching Good News (CCC 767-768).
      b. Christ endowed his community with a structure that will remain until the Kingdom is fully achieved (CCC 765).
      c. The Church is born primarily of Christ's total self-giving (CCC 766).
   2. The Holy Spirit revealed the Church at Pentecost (CCC 767-768).
   3. Church is pillar and foundation of truth (1 Tm 3:15; CCC 768).

   a. Jesus remains with us always.
   b. The events of the first Pentecost.
   c. Holy Spirit is present in the entire Church (CCC737-741).
      1) The Spirit’s gifts help the Church to fulfill her mission (CCC 768; LG, no. 4).
   b. The preaching of Peter on Pentecost (CCC 551-556).
   c. The growth of the Church (CCC 766-769).
   d. Persecutions and Martyrdoms (CCC 675-677, 769, 1816, 2473-2474)
      1) Persecutions (CCC 675-677, 769, 1816).
   e. The Church spreads to the Gentiles (CCC762, 774-776, 781).
      1) The conversion of St. Paul (CCC 442).
      2) Paul’s missionary journeys (CCC 442).

6. Handing on the teaching of Jesus (CCC 787-789,792, 796).
7. The role of the Apostles in the early Church (CCC 857).
   a. Chosen and appointed by Jesus Christ (CCC857-860).
   b. The Council of Jerusalem: the Apostles recognized as leaders of the Church (CCC 860).
   c. Community of Apostles continued in community of pope and bishops (CCC 861-862).

8. Images of the Church (CCC, 804-810)
   b. The temple of the Holy Spirit (CCC 797-801).
   c. The bride of Christ (CCC 796).
d. The vine and branches (CCC 787).
e. The seed and the beginning of the Kingdom (CCC, nos. 541, 669, 764, 768).
f. The family of God (CCC 791, 1655-1658, 2204-2685).

9. Marks of the Church (CCC, 813-870, 960, 1208-1209)
“The sole Church of Christ which in the Creed we profess to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic . . . subsists in the Catholic Church” (CCC 870).

a. The Church is one (CCC 813-822).
   1) Unity is in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit; it is visible unity in the world.
   2) The Church is united in charity, in the profession of one faith, in the common celebration of worship and sacraments, and in Apostolic Succession (CCC 815).
   3) In union with the Pope

b. The Church is holy (CCC 823-829).
   1) Holiness is from the all-holy God: all human beings are called to live in holiness.
   2) Christ sanctifies the Church through the Holy Spirit and grants the means of holiness to the Church.
   3) Mary, Mother of the Church and model of faith.
      a) The Annunciation and Mary’s “yes” to God.
      b) Mary’s perpetual virginity.
      c) The Immaculate Conception and the Assumption.
   4) Canonized saints: models of holiness.
      a) Their example encourages us.
      b) They intercede for us.
   5) The members of the Church are always in need of purification, penance, and renewal (LG, no. 8, cited in CCC 827, 1428; UR, no. 6, cited in CCC 821).

c. The Church is catholic (CCC 830-856).
   1) The Church has been sent by Christ on a mission to the whole world and exists worldwide.
   2) The Church exists for all people and is the means to salvation for all people.
   3) Salvation comes from the Church even for nonmembers (see Dominus Iesus, section 20; CCC 1257).

d. The Church is apostolic (CCC 857-865).
   1) Founded by Christ on the Twelve with the primacy of Peter.
   2) Has apostolic mission and teaching of Scripture and Tradition.
   3) Guided by successors of the Twelve: the pope and bishops.
   4) Christ calls all Church members to share Gospel of salvation.

B. The Church is the sign and instrument of communion with God and unity of the human race (CCC, 747, 760, 780, 804, 810)

1. The Church’s mission (CCC, 760, 849-852)
   Christ founded the Church with a divine purpose and mission (CCC 760).
   a. Jesus—not the members—endowed Church with authority, power, and responsibility (CCC 763-766).
   b. Church continues Christ’s salvation, preserves and hands on his teaching.
c. Evangelization and the New Evangelization (CCC, 861, 905)

2. Visible structure of the Church: a hierarchical communion (CCC, 880-896, 936-944)
   a. The Church is a communion of twenty-one Eastern Catholic Churches and one Western Church, all in union with the Pope.
   
   b. The various vocations of life.
      1) Ordained bishops, diocesan and religious priests continue the ministry of Christ the Head (CCC 1555-1568).
      2) Ordained deacons continue the ministry of Christ the Servant (CCC 1569-1571).
      3) Religious: consecrated by vows to Christ (CCC 925-933).
      4) Laity: baptized members of Christ (CCC 897-913).
         a) Evangelization and sanctification of the world.
         b) The laity live in various states of life:
            i. Marriage and family life.
            ii. Single life.

3. The teaching office in the Church, the Magisterium (CCC, 890)
   a. The teaching role of the pope and bishops.
      1) Authentic interpreters of God’s Word in Scripture and Tradition.
      2) Ensure fidelity to teachings of the Apostles on faith and morals (CCC, Glossary).
   b. Indefectibility and infallibility.
      1) Indefectibility: the Church will always teach the Gospel of Christ without error even in spite of the defects of her members, both ordained and lay.
      2) Infallibility: the gift of the Holy Spirit, which gives the Church the ability to teach faith and morals without error.

4. Belonging to the Church is essential (CCC, 760, 804, 838-839, 597, 846-847)
   a. Christ willed the Church to be the ordinary way and means of salvation (CCC 763, 772-776).
   b. We receive Christ’s redemption as members of his Body the Church.
   c. Christ entrusted Word and sacraments to the Church for our salvation. (CCC, 96-96, 1110,1131)
   d. Church has fullness of truth and totality of the means of salvation.

5. Living as a member of the Church is living as a disciple of Jesus means we live as disciples, proclaiming the Lord Jesus’ teaching to others (CCC, 520, 1248, 2757)
   a. As disciples of Christ we are "salt and light for the world."
   b. Necessity of prayer (CCC 2612, 2621).
      1) The Lord forms, teaches, guides, consoles, and blesses us through prayer.
      2) Prayer helps us understand the teachings of Jesus Christ and his Church in a deeper way and live them more fully.
Challenges (Apologetics)

A. Why do I have to be a Catholic? Aren’t all religions as good as another (CCC 760, 817-822, 836)?

1. To be a Catholic is to be a member of the one true Church of Christ. While elements of truth can be found in other churches and religions, the fullness of the means of salvation subsists in the Catholic Church (CCC 816, 836-838).

2. Christ willed that the Catholic Church be his sacrament of salvation, the sign and the instrument of the communion of God and man (CCC 817-776, 780).

3. Christ established his Church as a visible organization through which he communicates his grace, truth, and salvation (CCC 771).

4. Those who through no fault of their own do not know Christ or the Catholic Church are not excluded from salvation; in a way known to God, all people are offered the possibility of salvation through the Church (CCC 836-848).

5. Members of the Catholic Church have the duty to evangelize others (CCC 849-856).

B. Isn’t the Church being hypocritical in telling other people to be holy and avoid sin when many Catholics, including the clergy, are guilty of terrible wrongs (CCC 823-829)?

1. Some members of the Church might be hypocritical. Members of the Church, like all human beings, are guilty of sin, but this doesn’t make the Church wrong or hypocritical.

2. The Church teaches what God has told us about how to be holy and the necessity of avoiding sin. Failure by members of the Church to live out what God has taught does not invalidate the truth of the teaching we have received through the Apostles and their successors.

3. The Church is guided and animated by the Holy Spirit and, as the Body of Christ, remains sinless even if her members sin.

C. Who needs organized religion? Isn’t it better to worship God in my own way, when and how I want?

1. God desires us to come to him as members of his family, his new people, so he established the Church to accomplish that purpose (CCC 760).

2. No one and no community can proclaim the Gospel to themselves (CCC 875).

3. Because human beings are social in nature, we need each other’s encouragement, support, and example (CCC 820).

4. Worship of God has both a personal dimension and a communal dimension: personal, private worship is encouraged to complement communal worship (CCC 821, 1136-1144).

5. The Church offers us authentic worship in spirit and in truth when we unite ourselves with Christ’s self-offering in the Mass (CCC 1322-1324).

6. God taught in the Old and New Testaments for people to come together and worship in the way that he revealed to them (CCC 1093-1097).

7. The Catholic Church is structured so that all the members, clergy and laity alike, are accountable to someone (CCC 871-879).

D. How is it that the Catholic Church is able to sustain the unity of her members even though they live out their faith in different cultures and sometimes express their faith in different ways?

1. The Church is able to sustain unity because she has the apostolic teaching office of the pope and bishops to guide and direct her under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (CCC 815).

2. It is the pope and bishops who are the successors in every age to St. Peter and the Apostles (CCC 815, 862).

3. The unity of the Church is also sustained through the common celebration of worship and the sacraments (CCC 815).
V. Sacraments as Privileged Encounters with Jesus Christ

Help students understand that they can encounter Christ today in a full and real way in and through the sacraments, and especially through the Eucharist. Students will examine each of the sacraments so as to learn how they may encounter Christ throughout life.

A. Sacrament is an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which the divine life of grace is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1131)

1. The Sacraments confer the grace they signify (CCC, 1127, 2021-2024)
2. Jesus Christ is the living ever-present Sacrament of God (CCC, 1088-1090, 1187)
3. The Church as Universal Sacrament of Jesus Christ (CCC, 774-776, 1111)

B. Redemption is mediated through the Seven Sacraments (CCC, 1129)

1. Christ acts through the sacraments (CCC1084-1085).
   a. Signs and symbols (CCC 1145-1152).
2. The Church at prayer (CCC 1073).
   a. Prayer defined; different forms (CCC 2559, 2565).
   b. Essential for a believer (CCC 2558).
   c. Liturgical prayer and the sacraments (CCC 1137-1144).
   d. Personal prayer; Christian meditation (CCC 2626-2643, 2705-2719).

C. The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist (CCC,1275)

1. The Sacrament of Baptism (CCC, 985, 1277, 1279-1280)
   The sacrament which is the birth of the baptized into new life in Christ. In Baptism, Original Sin is forgiven along with all personal sins. By it we become adoptive children of the Father, members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit; it also incorporates us into the Church and makes us sharers in the priesthood of Christ (CCC 1279-1280).
      1) The Sacrament of Baptism is pre-figured in the Old Testament at creation when the Spirit of God hovered over the waters at creation (Gn 1–2); in Noah’s ark (Gn 7); in the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 14) and the Jordan (CCC 1217-1222).
   b. The celebration of Baptism
      1) of adults (CCC, 1247-1249)
      2) of infants (CCC, 403, 1231, 1233, 1250-1252, 1282, 1290)
      3) Role of godparents (CCC, 1255)
      4) Essential elements: Immersion or triple pouring of water on the head; saying the words of the Trinitarian formula (CCC, 12391240, 1278)
   c. Effects of Baptism (CCC, 1279)
      1) Die and rise with Christ (CCC, 1227)
      2) Freed from Original Sin and all sins (CCC, 985, 1263)
      3) Adopted children of God (CCC, 1265-1266)
      4) Members of the Church (CCC, 1267-1270)
      5) Indelible character; this Sacrament cannot be repeated (CCC, 1272-1274, 1280)
6) Holy Spirit and discipleship (CCC, 1241)

d. Requirements for reception (CCC, 1247-1255)

e. Minister of the Sacrament (CCC, 1256, 1284)
   1) Ordinary circumstances.
   2) In danger of death.

f. Necessity of Baptism (CCC, 1257-1261, 1281, 1283)

g. Implications.
   1) Members of Church (CCC 1267).
   2) Rights and duties (CCC 1269).
   3) Call to mission (CCC 1270).

h. Appropriating and living this sacrament (CCC 1694).
   1) Reminders of our Baptism.
      a) In the Church’s liturgy: Easter vigil, renewal of baptismal promises, sprinkling rite at Mass (CCC 281, 1217, 1254, 1668, 2719).
      b) In pious practices: blessing with holy water (fonts in churches and homes), sign of the cross (CCC 1668).
      a) Sharing in the Death and Resurrection of Christ.
      b) Turning away from sin and selfish actions; ongoing conversion.

2. The Sacrament of Confirmation (CCC, 1316)
The sacrament in which the gift of the Holy Spirit received at Baptism is confirmed, strengthened, and perfected for living the Christian life and spreading the faith to others; in this sacrament we receive a permanent sign or character so it cannot be repeated.

a. Scriptural basis: Acts 8: 14-17 (CCC, 1287-1288)
   1) The book of Isaiah foretold that the Spirit of the Lord shall rest on the hoped-for Messiah (Is 11:2; CCC 1286).

b. The celebration of Confirmation
   1) Rite of Confirmation (CCC, 1298-1300, 1318)
   2) RCIA (CCC, 1232-1233, 1298)
   3) Essential elements: Laying on of hands and anointing with Chrism; the words of the formula (CCC, 1300, 1320)

c. The effects of Confirmation (CCC, 1316)
   1) Perfection of baptismal grace (CCC, 1285)
   2) Help of the Holy Spirit's gifts and fruits (CCC, 830-1832); in the Eastern Churches Chrismation is given with Baptism
   3) Indelible character; this Sacrament cannot be repeated (CCC,1303-1305)
   4) Call to spread and defend faith (CCC, 1303)
   5) Discernment of God's call (CCC, 1303)
6) Stewardship (CCC, 1303)

  d. Requirements for reception (CCC, 1306-1310, 1319)
  e. The Minister of Confirmation (CCC, 1312-1314)

  f. Appropriating and living this sacrament: life in the Holy Spirit (CCC 1694).

    1) How to know the Holy Spirit’s promptings and actions in your life, with the help of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1694).
      a) Learn Sacred Scripture (CCC 50-51, 94-95, 1066).
      b) Live the sacraments (CCC 1071-1072, 1091-1092).
      c) Love the Catholic Church—the Church that Christ began.

    2) Prayer is the foundation for knowing and following the will and actions of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1309, 1073, 2670-2672).

3. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist (CCC, 1407)

   Holy Eucharist: the sacrament which re-presents in the Mass the sacrificial Death of Christ and his Resurrection—making it possible for us to eat his Body and drink his Blood (CCC 1323).

   a. Scriptural basis: Ex 12; Mt 14:13-21; Mt 26:26-29; Mk 6:30-33; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 9:10-17; Lk 22:14-20; Jn 2:1-12; Jn 6:22-59; Jn 13-17; 1 Cor 11:23 (CCC, 1337-1344)

      1) The Eucharist is pre-figured in the Old Testament, beginning with the priest-king Melchizedek (Gn 14:18-20), Israel eating unleavened bread every year at Passover, and Yahweh providing manna from heaven (CCC 1333, 1544).

   b. Theology.

      1) Institution (CCC 1337-1340).
      2) “In memory” (CCC 1341-1343).
      3) Thanksgiving and praise (CCC 1359-1361).
      4) Sacrificial memorial (CCC 1362-1372).

   c. Celebration of the Eucharist (CCC, 1348-1355, 1408)

      1) Celebration of the Mass (CCC, 1348-1355)

      2) Essential elements (CCC, 1412, 1352-1355; CIC 924.1-3, 926, 927)

      3) Christ's Real Presence; Transubstantiation (CCC, 1373-1377, 1409, 1413-1414)

      4) Worship of the Eucharist (CCC, 1378-1379, 1385-1386, 1418)

         a) Adoration (CCC 1378).
         b) Tabernacle (CCC 1379).
         c) Reverence (CCC 1385-1386, 1418).

   d. The effects of the Eucharist (CCC, 1416)

      1) Union with Jesus and the Church (CCC, 1391, 1396)
      2) Forgiveness of venial sin (CCC, 1394)
      3) Protection from grave sin (CCC, 1395)
      4) Commits us to the poor (CCC, 1397)

   e. Requirements for fruitful reception (CCC, 1376, 1385-1388, 1415, 1417)

      1) Baptized member of the Church who believes in the Real Presence and Transubstantiation (CCC 1376, 1385, 1387-1388).
      2) Free from grave sin (CCC 1385).
      3) One hour fast from food and drink (CCC 1387).

   f. Minister of this Sacrament (CCC, 1369, 1410-1411, 1566)

   g. Appropriating and living this sacrament.
1) Active participation in Mass where the Lord comes in both word and sacrament (CCC 2042, 2181-2182).
2) Prayer of thanksgiving on receiving Jesus Christ in the Eucharist (CCC 358-1359).
3) Reflective prayer on the meaning of Christ’s Death and Resurrection, and petition for the grace to give to others of ourselves as the Lord did (CCC 1359-1361).

D. The Sacraments of Healing are Penance and Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick

1. Penance and Reconciliation (CCC, 986, 1486)
   Penance and Reconciliation: the sacrament through which sins committed after Baptism can be forgiven, and reconciliation with God and community can be effected (CCC 1422, 1425, 1428, 1446).

   a. Scriptural basis: Jesus gives the Eleven the power to forgive sins (Jn 20:22-23). Examples of forgiveness (Mk 2:1-12; Lk 15:11-32; Jn 8:1-11; CCC 1444).

   b. Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
      1) Individual confession (CCC, 1456-1458, 1480, 1484, 1497)
      2) Communal service (CCC, 1482)
      3) General Absolution (CCC, 1483)
      4) Essential elements: Penitent's contrition and firm purpose of amendment, confession, and penance or satisfaction; priest's absolution (CCC, 1450-1458, 1480-1484, 1491-1494)

   c. Effects of this Sacrament (CCC, 1496)
      1) forgiveness of all sin (CCC, 1442)
      2) Reconciliation with God by which grace is received (CCC, 1468-1469; 1496)
      3) Reconciliation with the Church (CCC, 1443-1445)
      4) Remission of punishment for sin (CCC, 1470, 1496)
      5) Peace and serenity (CCC, 1496)
      6) Spiritual strength to resist temptation (CCC, 1496)

   d. Requirements for reception
      1) Contrition, both perfect and imperfect (CCC, 1451-1454, 1490, 1492)
      2) Confession of grave and mortal sins (CCC, 1455-1457, 1493)
      3) Confession of venial sins recommended (CCC, 1458)

   e. Minister of this Sacrament (CCC, 1461-1466, 1495)
      1) The seal of confession (CCC 1467).

   f. Implications (CCC 1468-1470).
      1) Thanksgiving and amendment (CCC1459, 1451).
      2) Ongoing conversion (CCC 1423).
      3) Reconciliation with the Church community (CCC 1422, 1443-1445, 1469).

   g. Appropriating and living this sacrament (CCC 1451, 1468-1469, 1470).
      1) Prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of God’s forgiveness of sins.
      2) Reflective prayer on contrition in its fullest sense: sorrow for our sins with the resolution to avoid future sin (CCC 1452).

   h. Indulgences (CCC, 1498)
2. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick gives spiritual healing and strength to a person seriously ill and sometimes also physical recovery (CCC, 1499-1513)
   a. Scriptural basis: James 5:14-15 (CCC, 1510)
   b. The celebration of this Sacrament
      1) Individual celebration (CCC, 1514-1516)
      2) Communal celebration (CCC, 1517-1518)
      3) Viaticum (CCC, 1524-1525)
      4) Essential elements: Laying on of hands and anointing forehead and hands with Oil of the Sick; spoken words of the formula (CCC, 1517-1519, 1531)
   c. The effects of this Sacrament (CCC, 1520-1523, 1532)
      1) Union of the sick person to Christ in his Passion
      2) Strength, peace, and courage to endure the sufferings of illness or old age
      3) The forgiveness of sins
      4) The restoration of health if God wills it
      5) Preparation for passing over to eternal life
   d. Requirements for fruitful reception (CCC, 1514-1515, 1528-1529)
      1) Contrition, both perfect and imperfect (CCC 1451-1454).
      2) Confession of grave or mortal sins (CCC 1455-1457).
      3) Confession of venial sins recommended (CCC 1458).
   e. Minister of this Sacrament: priest or bishop (CCC, 1516, 1530)
   f. Implications (CCC 1532).
      1) The Lord Jesus does not abandon or forget us; he is with us in all things.
      2) The Lord Jesus’ healing power is still at work in the world.
   g. Appropriating and living this sacrament (CCC 1522-1523).
      1) Prayerful reflection on the healing power of Jesus Christ.
      2) Prayer on accepting God’s will.
      3) Prayer on offering up our sufferings to God.

E. The Sacraments at the Service of Communion are Holy Orders and Matrimony

1. Holy Orders is the Sacrament through which a man is made a bishop, priest or deacon, and is given the grace and power to fulfill the responsibilities of the order to which he is ordained (CCC, 1591-1592)
   a. Scriptural basis: Mt 16: 18ff; Mt 28: 19-20; Lk 6:12-16; Mk 3:14-19
      (CCC, 1577)
      1) Jesus consecrates his followers at the Last Supper (Jn 17).
      2) To remember him, Jesus commanded his followers, “Do this in memory of me.” His Apostles continued to celebrate the Eucharist as ordained ministers.
   b. The celebration of this Sacrament
      1) Bishop, Priest, Deacon (CCC, 1554-1571, 1593-1596); the Eastern Churches include minor orders of cantor, lector, and subdeacon
      2) Essential elements: imposition of hands and spoken prayer of consecration (CCC, 1572-1574, 1597)
   c. The effects of this Sacrament
      1) Indelible character, this Sacrament cannot be repeated (CCC,1581-1584)
2. Grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1585-1589)

d. Requirements for reception
1) Called to ministry (CCC, 1578)
2) Baptized male (CCC, 1577, 1598)
3) Celibacy in the Latin Church (CCC, 1579)
4) Adequate education and formation (CCC, 1578, 1598)
5) Mental health screening (PPF 5, 53)
6) Life-long commitment to personal prayer and devotion (CCC, 1567, 1579)
7) Servant Leader in Person of Christ (CCC, 1552-1553, 15481551)

e. Minister of this Sacrament: bishop (CCC, 1575-1576, 1600)

f. Implications.
1) Servant leaders according to order (CCC 1547ff.).
2) Distinctive ministries of bishop, priest, and deacon (CCC 1594-1596).

g. Appropriating and living this sacrament.
1) Prayer for more vocations to the priesthood (CCC 1548).
2) Praying for bishops, priests, and deacons (CCC 1547).
3) Offering help and support to bishops, priests, and deacons (CCC 1547).

2. Marriage is the Sacrament in which a baptized man and a baptized woman form with each other a lifelong covenantal communion of life and love that signifies the union of Christ and the Church through which they are given the grace to live this union (CCC, 1601, 1603, 1613-1616, 1642, 1660)

a. Scriptural basis: Jn 2:1-11; Mt 19:1-15; Mk 5:31-32 (CCC, 1614-1615)
1) Jesus raises marriage to the dignity of a sacrament.

b. Theology
1) Sacramental marriage (CCC1621-1630).

c. The celebration of this Sacrament (CCC, 1621-1624)
1) Within Mass (CCC 1621-1624).
2) Within Liturgy of the Word.
3) Essential elements: free consent of the couple, given in the presence of the Church's minister and two witnesses (CCC, 1625-1632, 1662-1663)

d. The effects of this Sacrament (CCC, 1638-1642, 1661)
1) Grace to perfect the couple's love for each other and strengthen their bond
2) Help to live the responsibilities of married life
3) Help on the journey to eternal life

e. Requirements for reception
1) Baptism (CCC, 1617, 1625, 1633)
2) No prior bond or other impediments (CCC, 1625)
3) Able to give free consent (CCC, 1625, 1627)
4) Celebration of marriage according to Church law (CCC,1625-1637)
5) Promises and requirements of marriage: unity and indissolubility, fidelity, openness to children (CCC, 1644-1654, 1664-1665)

f. The minister of this Sacrament
1) Baptized man and a baptized woman who are free to marry before duly authorized sacred minister and two witnesses (CCC, 1623, 1630)
2) In Eastern Churches, the priest is the minister of the Sacrament (CCC, 1623)

**g. The requirements of marriage.**
1) Unity and indissolubility (CCC 1644-1645).
2) Fidelity (CCC 1646-51).
3) Openness to children (CCC 1652-1654).

**h. Implications.**
1) Lifelong, conjugal fidelity (CCC 1646ff.).
2) Domestic Church (CCC 1655-1658).
3) Gift of children and nurturing them (CCC 1652-1653).
4) Qualities of successful marriages (CCC 1641-1658).

**i. Appropriating and living this sacrament.**
1) Prayer for parents, relatives, and all who are married (CCC 1657).
2) Praying for our lives ahead, asking God to help us know his will and to follow it in faith (CCC 1656).
3) Careful preparation for marriage, remote, proximate, and immediate (FC, no. 66; CCC 1632).
4) Ongoing marriage enrichment (CCC 1632, 1648).
5) Reflective prayer on married life as witness to Christ’s love (CCC 1661).

F. Sacramentals and Popular Piety (CCC 1678-1679)
1. Sacramentals dispose us to cooperate with the grace of the sacraments (CCC 1669).
2. Forms of piety and popular devotion are religious expressions of the Christian people (CCC 1674).

**Challenges (Apologetics)**

**A. Can’t a person go directly to God without the help of the Church or a priest (CCC 1538-1539)?**
1. Any person can always pray directly to God. However, God established the Church as a way for him to teach us and to enrich us with his grace. Jesus Christ gave us the Church and the sacraments for our salvation (CCC 774-776).
2. Sacraments provide an encounter with Christ which is unique and graced (CCC 1076).
3. Sacraments celebrate and strengthen our unity and identity (CCC 774).

**B. Can’t God forgive us directly when we are sorry for sin (CCC 1434, 1440-1445)?**
1. While God can forgive us however and whenever he wants, he knows what is best for us and has taught us through Jesus that he wants to forgive us through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (Jn 20:21-23; CCC 1421, 1442).
2. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is necessary to forgive grave or mortal sins (CCC 1468), but it is not essential for the forgiveness of venial sins (CCC 1493).
3. People need to confess sins to face the reality of the wrong they have done, and in and through this sacrament, they can be assured of forgiveness (CCC 1455-1457).
4. The sacrament also gives the assurance of forgiveness to a truly repentant person CCC, nos. 1452-1453.

**C. Aren’t the sacraments just celebrations to mark significant moments in our life (CCC 1066, 1070)?**
1. While the sacraments are usually celebrated at appropriate or significant moments or events in our lives, they are much more than simply celebrations of those moments.
They are personal encounters with Christ, who acts through sacraments to help us (CCC 1088-1090).

2. Each sacrament gives a special grace (CCC 1129).

D. Is there any difference between receiving Holy Communion in a Catholic Church and going to communion in a Protestant worship service (CCC 1411)?

1. Yes, there are differences.
   a. Because of Apostolic Succession and the priesthood, Holy Eucharist in the Catholic Church is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Churches without Apostolic Succession and the priesthood do not have that gift (CCC 817-822, 1411).
   b. Reception of Holy Communion in the Catholic Church is a statement of belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and of unity with all Catholics throughout the world (CCC 1376, 1391, 1398).

2. Because of these differences, Catholics must not take communion in Protestant worship services, and non-Catholics must not receive Holy Communion in Catholic Churches (CCC 1411).

E. How do we know that any of the sacraments really work? For example, if a person dies after receiving the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, does that mean it did not work (CCC 1500-1501, 1503-1505, 1508-1509, 1520-1523)?

1. The effects of the grace we receive through the sacraments is not something that can be seen or measured.

2. Each of the sacraments is effective whether we feel it or not; it is sometimes only in looking back that we can recognize how Christ has touched us and helped us through the sacraments.

3. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick can have different effects. Sometimes Christ does bring about physical healing through that sacrament. Other times, the healing is spiritual in that it helps the person to be better prepared for death, to be at peace, and to be eager to be with the Lord.
VI. Life in Jesus Christ

A. Life in Christ

1. God created us for happiness, to share eternal life with him in Heaven; we are made in his image and likeness (CCC, 45, 1700-1706, 1711)
   a. Desire and longing for God (CCC 27).
   b. Fall and promise of redemption (CCC 410).
   c. Jesus Christ fulfills this promise (CCC 456-460).
2. God created us in his image and likeness (CCC 1700-1706).
   a. The dignity of the human person (CCC 1700).
   b. Endowed with reason, intellect, and free will (CCC 1703-1706).
3. He calls us to beatitude or joy, true happiness (CCC, 1725-1726)
4. Our response is living as his disciple (CCC, 1693-1695, 1698)

B. God teaches us how to live this new life

1. Natural Moral Law (CCC, 1713)
   a. Reason participating in eternal law (CCC, 1954-1955)
   b. Basis for human rights and duties (CCC, 1956, 1978)
   c. Found in all cultures, basis for moral rules and civil law (CCC, 1958, 1960, 1979)
2. Revelation
   a. The Ten Commandments, as the privileged expression of the natural law, are revealed by God under the Old Covenant and fulfilled by Jesus Christ in the New Covenant, and they remain as a gift to his people (CCC, 1975, 1980, 1982, 2052-2083)
      1) I am the Lord, your God; you shall not have strange gods before me (CCC, 2134-2141)
         a) Theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity (CCC 2087-2094).
         b) Sins to avoid: superstition, idolatry, divination and magic, irreligion, atheism, agnosticism (CCC 2110-2132).
         c) Right to religious freedom (CCC 2107-2109)
      2) You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain (CCC, 2161-2163)
         a) Reverent speech about God (CCC 2142-2145).
         b) Sins to avoid: blasphemy or other abuse of God's name, perjury, misusing God's name in oaths or false oaths (CCC 2146-2155).
      3) Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day (CCC, 1193, 2175, 2190-2195)
         a) Meaning of Lord's Day (CCC 2168-2176).
         b) Serious obligation to attend Mass (CCC 2180-2185).
         c) Day of grace—rest from work (CCC 2184-2188).
         d) Sins against Third Commandment: missing Mass on Sundays and holy days (CCC 2180-2182), failing to pray (CCC...
2744-2745), failing to keep holy the Lord’s Day (CCC 2184-2188).

4) Honor your Father and your Mother (CCC, 2248-2257)
   a) Obedience in the family.
      i. Context of Christian family (CCC 2201-2206).
      ii. Duties of family members (CCC 2214-2231).
   b) Duties of civil authority and duties of citizens (CCC 2234-2243).

5) You shall not kill (CCC, 2319-2329)
   a) Respect human life in all its stages and situations (CCC 2258-2262).
   b) Legitimate self-defense and the death penalty (CCC 2263-2267).
   c) Principles regarding health, science, bodily integrity (CCC 2292-2301).
   d) Sins against the Fifth Commandment: murder; suicide; abortion; euthanasia; embryonic stem cell research; abuse of alcohol, drugs, food, or tobacco; abuse of the body (CCC 364,2268-2283, 2290-2291).

6) You shall not commit adultery (CCC, 2393-2400)
   a) Vocation to chastity (CCC 2337-2350).
   b) Offenses against chastity (CCC 2351-2359).
   c) Christian vision of marriage— theology of the body (CCC 2360-2379).
   d) Offenses against the dignity of marriage (CCC 2380-2391).
   e) Natural family planning.

7) You shall not steal (CCC, 2451-2462)
   a) Right to private property and just treatment (CCC 2401-2407).
   b) Sins to avoid: theft, keeping something loaned or lost, the destruction of the property of others, business fraud, paying unjust wages, breaking contracts (CCC 2408-2418).
   c) Overview of the social doctrine of the Church (CCC 2419-2449).
   d) Economic activity and social justice (CCC 2426-2436).
   e) Justice and solidarity among nations (CCC 2437-2442).

8) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor (CCC, 2505-2512)
   a) Living and witnessing truth (CCC 2468-2474).
   b) Sins to avoid: lying, perjury, rash judgment, detraction, calumny, boasting, making fun of others (CCC 2475-2487).
   c) Keeping secrets and confidences (CCC 2489).
   d) The responsibilities of the media and art (CCC 2493-2503).

9) You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife (CCC, 2529-2533)
   a) Respect the sanctity of marriage vows (CCC 2364-2365).
b) Practice modesty and purity of heart in thought, words, actions, and appearance (CCC 2517-2527).
c) Sins to avoid: lust and pornography (CCC 2351, 2354).

10) You shall not covet your neighbor's goods (CCC, 2552-2556)
   a) Practice simplicity of life and trust in God (CCC 2541-2548).
   b) Sins to avoid: envy and greed (CCC 2535-2540).

b. Teaching revealed by God in the New Covenant.
   1) The Two Great Commandments of Jesus (CCC, 2083)
      a) First Great Commandment relates to the first three Commandments of the Decalogue.
      b) Second Great Commandment relates to the rest of the Decalogue.

      a) The Beatitudes (CCC, 1716-1723, 1725-1726)
         i) Blessed are the poor in Spirit
         ii) Blessed are those who mourn
         iii) Blessed are the meek
         iv) Blessed are the merciful
         v) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
         vi) Blessed are the pure of heart
         vii) Blessed are the peacemakers
         viii) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake

      b) Other teaching.
         i) Love your enemies (CCC 2844).
         ii) Absolute trust in God (CCC 2828, 2861).
         iii) Non-violence (defense of innocent) (CCC 2306, 2263-2265).
         iv) Charity to others in judgment and action (CCC 1823-1827, 2478).
         v) Avoidance of hypocrisy (CCC 579).

c. The Church as teacher of moral principles (CCC, 2032-2035, 2050-2051)
   1) The Precepts of the Church (CCC, 2042-2043, 2048)
   2) Magisterium and natural law (CCC, 2030-2040, 888-892, 2036, 2050)
   3) Church teaching forms one's conscience for moral decision making (CCC, 1776-1782, 1795-1797, 1802)
      a) Three sources of morality of an act: object, intention, circumstances (CCC 1757)
   4) The witness of others (CCC, 1194-1195)

d. God's love and mercy through Jesus Christ (CCC, 2011, 2025, 2027,2196, 2448)
   1) Living new life in Christ Jesus and the Gospel message are the basis for Catholic moral teaching

e. Our vocation - Universal call to holiness as disciples of Jesus Christ (CCC, 520521, 901- 913)
   1) Living life as a Disciple of Christ (CCC, 520-521, 901-913, 1694, 1194, 1195).
      a) “Love one another as I have loved you.”
      b) Discipleship—lived witness.
i) Daily life and work.
ii) Service to the Church (CCC 898).
iii) Missionary activity (CCC 904-907, 931).
c) The radical demands of the Gospel for all believers.


3) Virtue: Theological and Cardinal (CCC, 1803-1829, 1833-1841)

4) Sustaining the moral life of the Christian
   a) Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1830-1831, 1845)
   b) Twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1832)

5) Conscience (CCC, 1746, 1777-1802)
   a) Definition of conscience (CCC 1777-1782).
   b) Proper formation of conscience (CCC 1783-1785).

6) Sacraments and prayer offer us the grace and strength to live a moral life (CCC, 2047)

7) Living the moral teaching of Jesus Christ and his Church (CCC 1694).
   b) The importance of personal prayer on Jesus Christ’s teachings (CCC 2014-2016).

f. The reality of sin (CCC, 369-370, 415)
   1) Original Innocence (CCC, 369-379, 384)
   2) Effects of Original Sin (CCC, 396-406, 416-418, 1714)
   3) Sin (CCC, 1849-1876)
      a) Sins of omission and commission (CCC, 1853)
      b) Mortal and venial sin (CCC, 1760-1761, 1855, 1860)
      c) Effects of sin (CCC, 1861-1864)

g. The human community
   1) The unity of the Trinity as the model of human fraternity (CCC 1890)
   2) The human person as the object of social organization (CCC 1892)
   3) Society ought to promote the exercise of virtue (CCC 1895)

h. Political authority and the common good (CCC 1897, 1899, 1903, 1906-1909)
   1) Public authority part of order established by God (CCC 1920)
   2) Authority must be ordered to the common good (CCC 1921)
   3) Political authority and the moral order (CCC 1923)
   4) Meaning of the common good (CCC 1925)
   5) Common good must promote dignity of human person (CCC 1926)
   6) Responsibility of state to protect common good (CCC 1927)

i. Social Justice
   1) Society and individuals should obtain their due (CCC 1943)
   2) Respect people as other-selves (CCC 1944)
   3) Equality is based on dignity and rights (CCC 1945)
   4) Solidarity ensures sharing of spiritual and material goods (CCC 1948)

Challenges (Apologetics)
A. If God created me free, doesn’t that mean that I alone can decide what is right and wrong (CCC 1776-1794, 1954-1960)?

I. No. The freedom God gave us is the capacity to choose what is right, true, and good and to resist temptation to sin (CCC 1730-1742); education for freedom (CCC 2207, 2223, 2228, 2526). The use of freedom to do whatever we want is a misuse of that freedom and actually lessens our freedom (CCC 1742).
2. Freedom is following the natural law God planted in our hearts (CCC 1954-1960).
3. In reality, sinful acts diminish freedom; moral acts increase it (CCC 1733).

B. Isn’t it wrong to judge other people by telling them something they are doing is wrong?
   1. No. We have a responsibility to each other to encourage one another to live a life free of sin. To do that, we must remember that sin is real (CCC 1849-1869) and be willing to call what is sinful “sin.”
   2. You would warn friends against doing something that could harm them; sin harms them more than physical evil (CCC 1787).
   3. The Church reminds us that we are to love the sinner, hate the sin (Jn 8:1-11; CCC 1465, 1846).
   4. The pressure in society to practice tolerance toward all, no matter what they do, is a distorted understanding of what tolerance means; moral actions must always be measured by truth (CCC 2477-2478).
   5. Fraternal correction is an act of charity (CCC 1793-1794).

C. Isn’t it wrong for the Church to impose her views of morality on others (CCC 1949-1960)?
   1. The Church has the responsibility to teach everyone as persuasively as possible about what God has revealed about how people should live, act, and treat each other; fulfilling this responsibility is not the same as the Church’s imposing her own views on others. In the development of public policy, the Church promotes the universal moral law and the common good, not her own ecclesiastical disciplines (CCC 1716-1724).
   2. Human dignity and the moral code revealed by God are universal, that is, meant for every person (CCC 1700).
   3. All people have the ability to understand the Church’s basic moral teaching because God has written the natural law on the heart of every person (CCC 1954-1960).
   4. If every person were to live by a relative moral code dependent on choice, this would lead to chaos and a loss of happiness.

D. Why can’t we make up our own minds and be in control over everything?
   1. The Church does teach that everyone can and should make up their own minds about their actions. The key is that the decision is made on the basis of an informed or educated conscience. The Church teaches us what is right and wrong to help us form our consciences correctly.
   2. It is always important to remember that we are finite human beings. This means we cannot know everything and we cannot be in control of everything.
   3. We have to remember that God knows, sees, and understands more than any of us can.
   4. The tragic conflicts that still exist in the world point to the imperfection of human beings (CCC 2317).
   5. Our sinfulness can only be overcome by Christ’s salvation (CCC 619-623).

E. There’s an old saying about charity beginning at home. Doesn’t this mean that I don’t have to worry about helping anyone else until I have enough to take care of me and my family?
   1. No; concern for others is always a responsibility and characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ.
   2. In the Parable of the Widow’s Mite (Mk 12:38-44; Lk 20:45–21:4), Jesus teaches us that real charity is measured not by how much one gives but by the degree of generosity with which something is given or done for another.
**Revision History**

09/01/16 – Original version. See note on page 5 about how the Diocese of Duluth has formatted this Framework to include elements from both the USCCB’s Parish and Catholic High School Curriculum Frameworks.