

## Guidelines for Catechesis of High School Youth Grades 9-12

### Stages of Development of Youth Grades 9-12 and Implications for Catechesis

---

#### GRADE 9-12 YOUTH

- becomes more accountable for “who I am” and “who am I to become”
- moves toward gaining a personal value system (not only what I think, but also why I think it)
- seeks further autonomy from parents and carries out more independent actions
- is able to share self honestly
- is able to comprehend the motives, feelings, and thoughts of other individuals and groups
- reflects a more critical consciousness
- moves to a search style of faith, with critical reflection about the meaning of life and a struggle for own faith identity
- develops a concern for integrity between belief and lifestyle
- strongly desires to be accepted and to love and be loved

---

#### THE CATECHIST

- provides opportunities for youth to explore identity and vocational issues
- explores the reasoning behind Church teachings and the relationship of teachings to life experiences
- develops youth’s leadership and planning skills and provides real opportunities for youth to use these in the planning and implementation of ministry programs
- uses youth as peer ministers
- guides students in discernment on issues of justice, morality, and personal actions and the repercussions
- uses in-depth discussion and analysis as part of learning sessions
- is not critical of doubts but help youth seek and find the presence of God in his/her own life
- provides meaning opportunities for service to the community and for advocating for justice, as well as challenging obvious contradictions in lifestyle to beliefs
- discusses signs of healthy, Christ-centered relationships, personally affirms the gifts of each individual, and provides a safe place for youth to share feelings and thoughts

**Word**  
**High School Youth Grades 9-12**

**REVELATION**

- God is both within our hearts (Immanent) and beyond our physical, sensory experience (Transcendent).
  - God's revelation and our response in faith are a profound dialogue between God and humankind.
  - Our own and the Church's understanding of who God is continues to deepen and develop.
  - Coming to know God better and develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ is a life-long process.
  - Faith is our free response to God.
  - We respond in faith through words and deeds.
- 

**SCRIPTURE**

- The Gospels in written form are a record of the preaching of the early Church about the teachings of Jesus and were composed after His death and resurrection.
  - Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the synoptic gospels because they are similar in content and structure.
  - The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John present the only portraits of Mary.
  - St. Paul and others wrote epistles in response to problems in the early Church communities.
  - There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.
  - Revelation, inspiration, and biblical interpretation are important terms in biblical study.
  - There is a difference between fact and religious truth (the truth of what Scripture teaches us about God's love and desire for our well being).
  - The major theme and life questions of the Hebrew & Christian Scriptures and their relevance to Christian life today are investigated.
- 

**CREED**

- How we image God shapes our understanding of god, the Church and eternity.
- There are many images to help us understand the mystery of God.
- Creation is God's gift to us, and we are called to be responsible stewards.
- Jesus' life, mission, and the words are key ways we can understand God's plan for us.
- Jesus' is with us now and until the end of time.
- The Holy Spirit has been with the Church throughout history.
- Jesus' values and actions led the Church to develop the seven Sacraments.
- Conversion to Christ is an ongoing process.
- The Church has moral norms and values for behavior.
- God unconditionally loves us, is merciful and forgiving
- Mary is the Mother of the Church.
- The canonization process of saints is unique to Catholicism.
- Saints, both historical and contemporary, are people who live the radical call of the Gospel in a variety of ways.

- Christians wait in hope for the final coming of Jesus and the last judgement.
  - True union with God will only come when Jesus Christ returns at the end of time.
  - Our journey toward salvation, although in union with God, is our responsibility.
  - Faith is a gift that can be nurtured and deepened.
  - Salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned.
-

## Worship

### High School Youth Grades 9-12

#### **SACRAMENTS**

- Sacraments relate to and respond to the events of our lives.
  - The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify, to build the body of Christ, and finally, to give worship to God. (SC 59)
  - Sacraments are the actions of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church. (CCC 1116)
  - Non-sacramental symbols are a part of human life.
  - At Baptism, we are anointed priest, prophet, and king. (RBC 62)
  - The Eucharist is the central celebration of the Church; everything in our Christian life flows from it or leads to it.
  - Jesus is truly, not symbolically, present in the Eucharist.
  - Transubstantiation is the change of bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Christ during the Eucharist.
  - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration of guidance and healing; expressing our need to forgive and be forgiven; a celebration of union with our God.
  - The ordained ministry or ministerial priesthood is at the service of the baptismal priesthood. (CCC 1120)
  - The RCIA has certain rites and periods that constitute the process.
  - Rituals are a part of human life.
- 

#### **PRAYER**

- Jesus is a person of prayer and He taught us how to pray.
  - Prayer is the integral communication in our relationship with Jesus Christ.
  - God hears our prayers.
  - There are a variety of prayer styles to experience such as meditation, formal, contemplative, centering, informal, communal, liturgical, spontaneous, scriptural, and personal.
  - Eucharist is the central prayer of the Church.
  - The Liturgy of the Hours is the prayer of the whole People of God (the Church). (SC83)
  - There are many traditional prayer forms in the Church such as the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration, Novenas, prayer in the Spirit, etc.
  - We need to identify those things that prevent us from praying and learn to cope with them.
- 

#### **LITURGICAL YEAR**

- The Liturgical Year enriches our faith life.
- Each season has its own symbols, colors, celebrations, and significance. Be able to identify these.
- Sunday is our weekly time to reflect upon how we are living our Christian call as an individual and as a Church.
- Easter is a fifty-day celebration, concluding on Pentecost, of the joyous reality of the Pascal Mystery.

- The newly initiated enter into a period of reflection during the Easter season called mystagogia.
  - Ordinary time has special significance and purpose within the Church year.
  - The Catholic Church in the US celebrates 6 Holy Days of Obligation. These are Immaculate Conception of Mary (Dec. 8), Christmas (Dec. 25), Mary, Mother of the Church (Jan. 1), The Ascension Thursday, Assumption (August 15), All Saints (Nov. 1).
-

## Community

### High School Youth Grades 9-12

#### **FAITH AND IDENTITY**

- Faith is a free response to God's revelation expressed in words and deeds.
  - Faith tells us that we share in Christ's victory over death and will rise again to live forever.
  - Times of doubt and certainty are natural parts of the faith growth process.
  - We are called to share our faith journey with others.
  - Religion refers to the ways in which people publicly express and share their understanding of God and their faith in God.
  - There are many different Christian churches with unique and similar beliefs and traditions.
  - We are called to reflect on our faith journey.
  - Faith is personal and is ecclesial.
- 

#### **PERSONAL GROWTH**

- Each person is born with the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
  - Each person is a unique creation of God and is loved.
  - Each person is called to live a life of holiness.
  - Our talents and gifts are given to us to be shared for the service of others.
  - We can learn to respond to struggles and problems in light of the Gospel.
  - We are challenged to replace our fears with God's love.
  - God calls us to be the best person that God has created us to be.
  - All human virtues are grouped around the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.
  - Development of a consistent ethic of life on which to base all relationships and decisions is a necessary task.
  - Dealing creatively with one's own sexuality (gender, sexual feelings, desires) is a fundamental challenge in every person's quest for maturity and holiness.
  - There are emotional, moral, psychological, physical, and spiritual dimensions to sexuality.
  - Each of us is called to develop a personal value system concerning all aspects of our sexuality based upon Catholic moral teaching.
  - We are called to incarnate the image of God in the way we live and love, and not to abuse the gifts we are given.
- 

#### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- Fidelity, love, and trust are the basis of responsible relationships.
- Jesus gives us an example of how to relate to other people.
- Jesus models healthy relationships through His life of service and teaching.
- Relationships can be enhanced through active listening, self-disclosure, and learning to communicate effectively with peers, family, and other adults.
- The primary Christian vocation is to bring God's love to others. Work and personal relationships with God and others are a part of a person's vocation.

- There is significant value in modesty, chastity, and sexual abstinence.
  - Single life, marriage, and a call to be a Brother, Sister or Priest are ways of living a vocation.
  - Marriage is a covenant of love by a woman and a man made before God and the Church community. This covenant is an unbreakable pledge of fidelity, a commitment that is deeper than a civil contract.
- 

## **CHURCH**

- The Church is a community of people who share the same faith and sacraments, and are united in the Holy Spirit under the leadership of the Pope and the other bishops.
  - The Church, the People of God, is called to be God's presence in the world.
  - The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was called by Pope John XXIII to foster renewal within the Church.
  - The documents of the VCII discuss issues of the role of the laity, Church structure, Liturgy, Scripture, the nature of the Church, ecumenism, and the Church in the modern world.
  - Ecumenism is the movement in the Church to work for unity among all Christians.
  - God works in the world and in a special way in the Church.
-

## Discipleship

### High School Youth Grades 9-12

#### **JUSTICE AND PEACE**

- Justice, peace, equality, and stewardship are grounded in Scripture in the prophets, the Gospels, the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, and in the Works of Mercy.
  - Discrimination in all forms are examples of injustices found in society and in our Church.
  - We are called to act on behalf of justice and peace personally, interpersonally, socially, and globally.
  - Social justice seeks to challenge the collective sin of society.
  - There are many social injustices in our world. Learning the necessary skills to analyze and act upon social issues is important.
  - The Scriptural vision of life includes a commit to justice, peace, equality, and stewardship.
  - We are called to conversion, and to live the vision, values, and lifestyle of the reign of God.
  - Social justice draws its strength from Scripture, worship, prayer, and the People of God.
  - Respecting dignity of the human person and human life includes all issues that concern the sacredness of life in all its forms; e.g., abortion, violence, discrimination, poverty, healthcare, euthanasia, etc.
- 

#### **MORALITY**

- God's unconditional love and forgiveness are central to Jesus' teaching.
  - What we do, whether grace-filled or sinful, affects God, others, and ourselves.
  - The basis for moral decision-making for a Catholic includes a well formed conscience, an understanding of sin, and a desire of reconciliation.
  - The process of internalizing moral principles is a life-long process that grows and changes as we mature.
  - Study of Jesus' and the Church's teaching on morality is essential to our life-long growth in faith.
  - To develop a well-formed conscience a person must:
    - ✓ study Scripture, the law of God, and Church teaching.
    - ✓ apply these teachings to daily life.
    - ✓ consider the consequences of the choices we make.
    - ✓ pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit.
    - ✓ act in accordance with our formed conscience.
  - Mature persons take responsibility for their actions.
  - Some sins are collective, the wrongful act of a group.
  - The Church's teachings on morality include the Spiritual/Corporal Works of Mercy, the theological and moral (cardinal) virtues, the seven capital sins, and the Precepts of the Church.
-

## **CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLES**

- The vocation of each Christian is to answer God's call through word, witness, worship, and service in the context of his/her life.
  - In order to develop a Christian lifestyle responsive to witness and service, one must go through a process of self-discovery and understand growth and development.
  - Each Christian lifestyle involves a commitment to relationship and intimacy.
  - Discernment skills are involved in choosing a lifestyle and whether one is called to a particular vocation.
  - We can develop skills to critically reflect on ourselves, our culture, media, and society's values in the light of Catholic Christian moral values.
  - There are specific values that reflect Christian marriages, love, and family relationships.
-

## Vocabulary for High School Youth Grades 9-12

**NB:** This represents vocabulary found in the ACRE Assessment; it is not an exhaustive list of what Senior High youth may be expected to know.

**Biblical Interpretation** - The process of understanding the meaning and truth of the Scriptures.

**Canonization** - The Church's official declaration that a person is in heaven and worthy of public imitation and veneration.

**Conversion** - (in the Christian context) an embracing of Jesus Christ and a disavowal of whatever keeps one from God.

**Ecclesial** - referring to the local or universal Church.

**Fortitude** - the cardinal virtue and gift of the Holy Spirit that enable one to attain good even when suffering and effort are needed.

**Four Cardinal Virtues** - the "good habits" infused at baptism which enable a person to control moral conduct with grace and reason. They are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

**Holy Days of Obligation** - feasts of such importance in the liturgical calendar that attendance at Mass is required.

**Immanent** - from within; the reference to God that describes His closeness to His creation.

**Inspiration** - the influence that God exercises of humans to communicate through them His divine revelation.

**Justice** - the giving to another of what is due him.

**Liturgy of the Hours** - the official cycle of the Church's daily prayer. Formerly called the Divine Office.

**Ministerial** - Describing the approach of an act in light of service or ministry.

**Mystagogia** - post-baptismal catechesis occurring during the Easter Season.

**Prudence** - the exercise of the knowledge of what things out to be avoided.

**Revelation** - God's activity in making Himself and His purposes known to humankind.

**Stewards** - those who manage physical and spiritual things which are used responsibly in according to God's will.

**Synoptic Gospels** - The Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke which exhibit extensive similarity of content and arrangement.

**Temperance** - the cardinal virtue that moderates the drive for sensual pleasure.

**Transcendent** - the relationship between a superior and lesser thing; the reference to God that describes Him as surpassing the universe because He is its Creator and is not dependant on it.

**Transubstantiation** - the change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ, so that only the accidents of bread and wine remain.