

# **AN INQUIRING AND DISCERNING HEART:**

Guidelines for Christian Formation in the Diocese of Dallas

A friend of mine, a minister not of our communion, once remarked that we Episcopalians sure talk a lot about our baptismal vows. In fact, I think this is one of the great outcomes of the liturgical renewal of our Church that eventuated in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Our baptismal liturgy puts its focus on mission, and our vows make clear that in being made one with Christ's death and resurrection we are being joined to his ministry of outreach and witness as well. It is no mistake that the rites of the Book of Common Prayer afford us the opportunity to revisit our baptisms over and over again.

In these guidelines, you have another way to focus on the meaning and mission that is at the heart of Baptism. Properly implemented, Christian education centers our attention on these vows and equips us to carry out what we have promised. These guidelines do not present you with a finished curriculum. Rather, they are a tool which will help you look at whatever curriculum you may use to see if and how your people are "being equipped for the work of the saints", and how to augment and improve that curriculum.

The utility of any tool is found only as it is used. Do not, I implore you, put this one away and forget it. Circulate it among the clergy and laity in your parish who are concerned with Christian education. It should be the subject not only of individual study, but of corporate discussion and planning. It is a resource for teachers. But it can also become an impetus for change and renewal in the work of Christian education as a whole at the local level.

I want to thank the members of the Catechesis Commission and contributors to this project. Their work was begun long before I showed up on the scene, and they have clearly given much time and effort to it. I commend them for their investment, and commend it to you all as one of the best resources I have ever seen for use in Christian education.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. James M. Stanton  
Bishop

**AN INQUIRING AND DISCERNING HEART:  
Guidelines for Christian Education  
In the Diocese of Dallas**

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Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord in your Holy Spirit. Give them **an inquiring and discerning heart**, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen

Prayer over the newly baptized,  
The Book of Common Prayer, page 308.

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# INTRODUCTION to the 1993 Original Edition

Christian Education is an ongoing process whose purpose is to support the people of God as they seek to live out the Baptismal Covenant and to express their unique following as followers of Jesus Christ. One of the greatest challenges to the leadership of the Church is the empowerment of all Christians through both formal and informal learning opportunities. It is the responsibility of the leadership in each congregation to establish and to develop an environment which enables people to discover themselves as God's people and to carry out the ministries to which they are called. It is through such vision and leadership that the whole congregation can come to feel its responsibility for community and total ministry within the life of the Church.

Report of the Presiding Bishop's Task Force  
on Christian Education in Congregations, 1988

But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children

## ***Deuteronomy 4:9***

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?

## ***Romans 10:13-14***

One of the more important tasks before the Christian community today is teaching our faith in God in Christ so that the members of the community can be a living witness in the world. Christians have a common history, a common identity, a common way of being in the world. As Anglicans, we are united by our common worship which reflects our foundations of Scripture, tradition and reason.

The Christian Education Network of the Diocese of Dallas is dedicated to fostering excellence in Christian education in all of the parishes and missions in our diocese. We believe that the adoption of *An Inquiring and Discerning Heart: Guidelines for Christian Education in the Diocese of Dallas* will serve as a foundation upon which clergy and educators can build an education program for all ages that will raise up Christians aware of their ministries.

The Guidelines are not intended to be a curriculum. They are intended as a common measure for parishes and missions in choosing curricula, in evaluating Christian education programs, in planning for teacher training, and in developing programs for all age levels. Educators and clergy within our diocese will all share a suggested minimum standard for developing expectations of knowledge, service, and faith development throughout the learning cycle, birth through adulthood.

Sacramentally, our lives as Christians begin with our baptism. Our call as Christians is to align our lives with the promises made when we are baptized. For this reason, the Christian Education Network, working with The Rev. Dr. Locke Bowman of Virginia Theological Seminary, has written the Guidelines using the questions of the Baptismal Covenant (BCP, pp. 304-305). We believe that these eight questions summarize the Christian life in terms of belief, service, and community life. However, we acknowledge that no definition of the eight

questions is comprehensive or will meet the need of all congregations. Please use these definitions as a beginning point in the design and implementation of the Christian education of your congregation.

God bless you in your work in nurturing and educating people in the faith and community of God in Christ Jesus.

In faith,

Shelly Simpson  
Chair, Christian Education Network  
Diocese of Dallas

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THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT  
The Book of Common Prayer, pages 304-305

Celebrant  
People

Do you believe in God the Father?  
I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant  
People

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant  
People

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

Celebrant  
People

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the  
breaking of bread, and in the prayers?  
I will with God's help.

Celebrant  
People

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin,  
repent and return to the Lord?  
I will, with God's help.

Celebrant  
People

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in  
Christ?  
I will, with God's help.

Celebrant  
People

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor  
as yourself?  
I will, with God's help.

Celebrant  
People

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect  
the dignity of every human being?  
I will, with God's help.

# Guidelines for Christian Education in the Diocese of Dallas

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### *Question 1*

#### **Q. Do you believe in God the Father?**

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Catechism - (BCP 845-847)

### *Goal*

The children will come to know God as the loving Creator.

### *Objectives*

- The children will tell or draw the creation story, naming some of the things that were created: heaven, earth, water, light, animals, land, day, night and persons.
- Genesis 1:1 to 2:3
- Genesis 2:4 to 2:25
- The children will affirm that God's creation is good.
- Jesus calls God Father and tells us to do so also (Matthew 5:8b – 13).
- The children will recite the Lord's Prayer in unison with a group (BCP p. 364)
- The children will experience talking with God in prayer and song.
- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing the story of one or more Old Testament characters who had a relationship with God, for example:
  - Adam and Eve: Genesis 2:15+
  - Noah: Genesis 6:8, 9:9 - 17
  - Abraham and Sarah: Genesis 12:1-5 (call), Genesis 15:5-6, 17:1-8 (covenant)
  - Moses: Exodus 2:1-10 (Birth), Exodus 3 (Call), Exodus 14:10-31 (Deliverance)
  - Ruth
  - David: 1 Samuel 13:13 and Acts 13:22 (God's heart), 1 Samuel 16:13 (anointed), 1 Samuel 17:45 – 49 (slays Goliath)
  - Esther

**Note: We assume that the children will accomplish the early childhood objectives with the help of the teacher.**

***Question 2***

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

***Goal***

The children will come to know Jesus as God's Son who loves and cares for each person.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing the Christmas story. (Matt 2:1-2:12, Luke 2:1-38)
- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing the Passion story (Palm Sunday to Easter) affirm that Jesus died and is alive. (Matthew 26, Mark 14:43+, Luke 22:47+ , John 18- 20:18)
- The children will affirm that Jesus is our friend.
  - Jesus and the children – Mark 10:13-16
  - Jesus heals a child – Mark 5:22 – 43 or Luke 8:41-56
  - Jesus and Zacchaeus – Luke 19:1-10
- The children will relate two or three events in the life of Jesus.
  - Jesus Presented – Luke 2:25-38
  - Jesus as child in Temple - Luke 2:41-52
  - Jesus' Temptation – Luke 4:1-13

***Question 3***

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

**Catechism: BCP p. 852-853**

***Goal***

The children will come to know the Holy Spirit as God's presence working within the Church, within each of us, and within the world.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell the story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11, 38-42).
- The children will tell the story of Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21-22, 4:1).
- The children will witness a baptism in a church service.
- The children will tell the story of their own baptism.
- The children will affirm that they are Christians by virtue of Baptism.
- The children will name people they know who have died and affirm that they are with God.
- The children will know how to make the sign of the cross.

***Question 4***

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers? (Acts 2:42)

A. I will, with God's help.

**Catechism: BCP p. 856-859**

***Goal***

The children will be able to participate fully in the community of faith.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell the story of the Last Supper.
  - Matthew 26:17-29
  - Mark 14:22-25
  - Luke 22:7-23
- The children will participate with the parish family in the Eucharist.
- The children will identify the Eucharistic meal as consisting of Jesus' presence in the blessed bread and wine.
- The children will participate in Sunday School as well as other parish events in order to be an active part of the community.
- The children will name three apostles of Jesus. (Matt 10:2-4)
- The children will identify the Bible as the Word of God.
- The children will be able to voice a prayer to God.

***Question 5***

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Catechism: BCP p. 845, 848-849**

***Goal***

The children will begin to develop a sense of right and wrong.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell at least one Biblical character story about making good choices:
  - Jesus' Temptation – Luke 4:1-13
  - Obedience to God: Jonah, Mary, Daniel (use children's book on these people)
- The children will identify hurtful behavior.
- The children will tell a story about Jesus' compassion
  - Healing the paralytic - Luke 5:17-26.
  - Good Shepherd: Matt 9:35-36, John 10:1-18

***Question 6***

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

***Goal***

The children will understand and share that Jesus loves us.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing two parables of Jesus.
- The children will participate in one outreach activity yearly (e.g., collecting food for a food pantry, mite boxes, Angel Tree) – could be done in Sunday School.
- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing one or more miracles of Jesus (i.e. loaves and fishes: Matt 14:13-21, Blind man healed: John 9, Healing of the 10 lepers: Luke 17:11-19, Jesus walks on water Matt 14:22-36)
- The children will sing along with at least one Bible story song or hymn.



***Question 7***

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

***Goal***

The children will affirm and appreciate that God loves everybody.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29b-37).
- The children will begin to recognize Christian symbols. (i.e. cross, fish, altar, chalice, dove, lamb, shell, etc.).
- The children will share a story about having helped someone.
- The children will share a story about having done something of which they are proud.

***Question 8***

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help

(BCP 854-56)

***Goal***

The children will come to appreciate and respect the inherent value of every living being.

***Objectives***

- The children will tell, draw, act out or sing the Greatest Commandment: Matthew 22:37-40.
- The children will tell, draw, act out, or sing the story of Woman at the Well: John 4:6-42.
- The children will tell or act out examples of respectful behavior.
- The children will tell that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17).
- The children will tell one story in which Jesus demonstrated recognition of the dignity of a person (e.g., blind Bartimaeus Mark 10:46-52, Widows mite: Mark:12:41-44).

## PRIMARY GRADES: 1- 3

### Question 1

Q. Do you believe in God the Father?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

(BCP 845-47)

### Goal

The children will begin to define their relationship with God.

### Objectives

- The children will recite or sing the Lord's Prayer.
- The children will tell the creation story in sequence, using art, music and/or drama. (Genesis 1,2 & 3)
- The children will tell the basic story of God's relationship with several of the following people: Cain and Abel, Moses, (Genesis 4; Exodus 2+), Abraham (Genesis 12+), Sarah (Genesis 12+), Isaac, (Genesis 21; Genesis 22:1-9; Genesis 24:1-67; Genesis 27:1-5), Jacob (Genesis 25:19+), Esau (Genesis 25:19+), Joseph (Genesis 37:2-50:26), Esther (Book of Esther), Ruth and Naomi (Book of Ruth), Deborah (Judges 4:1-5:31), Daniel (Book of Daniel), David (2 Samuel 1-20:26) and Solomon (1 Kings 1-11:43).
- The children will tell the story of the Exodus and the giving of the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 14 and Exodus 20:1-17)
- The children will compose simple prayers and/or lead group prayers.

(BCP 856)

## Question 2

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

- A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born  
of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was  
buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the  
Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
(BCP 849-850)

## Goal

The children will begin to see that the words of Jesus and the stories of His life have meaning and application today.

## Objectives

The children will be able to tell in their own words and with the use of various media the stories of:

- The Incarnation (John 1:1 and the Infancy narratives in Luke and Matthew)
- Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)
- Stories of Jesus with children (Luke 18:15-17, Mark 10:13-15 and Matthew 18:4)
- Call of the disciples (Matthew 5 and Mark 3:13-35)
- John the Baptist (Matthew and Luke 3:1+)
- Jesus' Death, Resurrection, and Ascension (Matthew 26:1-27:66, Matthew 28:1-20 and Acts 1:6-11)
- The children will tell about when they were born.
- The children will compare their own relationships with people with Jesus' relationships with people.

**Question 3**

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
(BCP 852)

**Goal**

The children will begin to recognize some ways in which the Holy Spirit and its work has been revealed in history as well as in today's Church.

**Objectives**

- The children will tell the story of the first Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1-13)
- The children will recognize and explain symbols of the Holy Spirit in pictures and those displayed in their own parish church.
- The children will tell the stories of two leaders of the early church and/or of two saints.
- The children will learn of specific outreach programs within his or her own parish and the purpose of these programs.
- The children will discuss ways in which each child or the group can participate in these programs.

**Question 4**

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 859, 856)

**Goal**

The children will begin to understand their place in the church community.

**Objectives**

- The children will participate in the parish Eucharist on a regular basis.
- The children will experience various Eucharistic rites in BCP and the Daily Office. These may be role-played in the classroom.
- The children will identify and explain the role of various ministers in the Holy Eucharist, ordained and lay. (BCP 855)
- The children will meet and talk with at least two of these ministers.
- The children will study all the apostles and talk about how they perceive the relationship of each with Jesus.. (Mark 3:13-35)
- The children will identify the Old Testament as the story of God's relationship to his chosen people, the Hebrews; and the New Testament as the story of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, and the development of the early Church.

**Question 5**

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 845, 848)

**Goal**

The children will begin to understand and accept responsibility for behavioral choices.

**Objectives**

- The children will role-play different problem-solving situations and discuss solutions with the group. (Luke 4:1-13)
- The children will learn the story of the temptation of Jesus.
- The children will learn at least two stories of Jesus' forgiving others. (John 8: 1-11; Luke 5:17-26; Luke 7: 36-50)

**Question 6**

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of  
God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 853, 855-57, 861-62, 865)

**Goal**

The children will begin to understand that the Gospel of Jesus Christ belongs to them and that they are called to share it.

**Objectives**

- The children will verbalize, in some form, their understanding of the Good News.
- The children will tell two stories of how the Good News was shared in the New Testament. (Acts 2:14-41; Acts 4:1-11)
- The children will learn ways they can and would be willing to share their story with others.
- The children will implement one of the foregoing ideas, either individually or with a group.
- The children will demonstrate familiarity with hymns and spiritual songs.



**Question 7**

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

**Goal**

The children will begin to see that "God loves others through me."

**Objectives**

- The children will recall the story of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:25-37)
- The children will define the word "neighbor" and begin to understand its meaning in the context of the Christian community.
- The children will participate in the ceremony of the washing of feet in the liturgy or in the classroom. (BCP 274)
- The children will share ideas on how they can serve others, individually and as part of a group and implement one idea.
- The children will become aware of services they have done for others and affirm the good deeds of their peers.

**Question 8**

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,  
and respect the dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help.  
(BCP 854-56)

**Goal**

The children will learn to show respect for others.

**Objectives**

- The children will hear and retell the story of Matthew the tax collector. (Luke 5:27-32)
- The children will review stories of Jesus (Infancy Narratives: Matthew 2:1-2:12; Luke 2:1-38; Passion story: Matthew 26; Mark 14:43+; Luke 22:47+; John 18-20:18; also Mark 10:13-16; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:41-56; Luke 19: 1-10; Luke 2:25-38; Luke 2:41-52; Luke 4:1-13) and discuss them in the context of their experiences.
- The children will read and discuss Form IV of The Prayers of the People.
- The children will cite examples of how they treat friends and strangers.

## INTERMEDIATE: GRADES 4-6

### Question 1

Q. Do you believe in God the Father?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven  
and earth.

Catechism – (BCP 845-847)

### Goal

The children will begin to recognize God's plan for God's creation.  
(BCP 846)

### Objectives

- The children will recite the Ten Commandments by the end of the sixth grade. (BCP 847-848)
  - Moses receives the Ten Commandments from God – Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:1-22
- The children will distinguish among different types of prayer. (See Appendix IV: Types of Prayer - ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication))
- The children will compose and/or lead group prayers of these different types. (Example of the Lord's Prayer – Matthew 5:9-13)
- The children will learn the role of the prophets in the Old Testament, and be able to tell the stories of Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah. (BCP 846-847) (See Appendix V - A Chronology of Old Testament Prophets)
- The children will say, write, sing, or copy Psalms 100 and 122.
- The children will learn to locate the individual books of the Old Testament in the Bible. (BCP 853)

## Question 2

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

(BCP 849-850)

## Goal

The children will begin to understand that the words and actions of Jesus apply to their lives.

## Objectives

- The children will discuss the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and identify symbols that pertain to it. (BCP 859) Matthew 26:17-29, Mark 14:12-25, Luke 22:7-20, 1Cor 11:23-25
- The children will list ways **God talks** to us **through**
  - other **people** (Philip and the Ethiopian - Acts 8:26-40)
  - **Scripture** (All Scripture is God breathed - 2 Tim 3:16-17)
  - **words** (Word made flesh - John 1:1-2, 14)
  - **images** (Writing on the wall - Daniel 5:1-6)
  - **dreams** (Jacobs Dream - Gen 28:10-17), and
  - **ideas** (Peter's Vision - Acts 10:9-16). (BCP 856)
- The children will recite the Nicene Creed. (BCP 851)
- The children will learn to locate the individual books of the New Testament in the Bible. (BCP 853)

### **Question 3**

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
(BCP 852)

### **Goal**

The children will begin to recognize how the Holy Spirit is working through them today.

### **Objectives**

- The children will discuss the sacrament of Baptism and identify symbols pertaining to it. (BCP 858) (Jesus' Baptism: Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21,22, John 1:31-34)
- The children will attend at least one baptism.
- The children will role-play a baptism, taking several parts.
- The children will identify some of their own gifts and talents and become involved in at least one parish ministry in which they can use them. Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)
- The children will continue to learn the stories of the various saints and leaders in the church (Good Resource is the book *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)

**Question 4**

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 859, 856)

**Goal**

The children will learn to recognize their individual gifts and learn to make choices for their use.

**Objectives**

- The children will learn about the lives of various saints and the choices they made in their lives (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)
- The children will become familiar with different prayers in BCP and *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, especially the Communion of Saints.
- The children will begin to learn the function and use of the Hymnal (Sing to God – Ps 30:4, Eph 5:19, Col 3:16)

**Question 5**

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 845, 848)

**Goal**

The children will begin to learn how to forgive others and accept forgiveness for themselves.

**Objectives**

- The children will tell at least two stories of Jesus' forgiving others.
  - Jesus Heals the Paralytic (Matthew 9:2-7)
  - Jesus is anointed by a sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50)
- The children will read and discuss one of the rites for Reconciliation of a Penitent. (BCP 446-52) Repent (Matt 4:17 and Luke 13:1-5)
- The children will define the concepts "sin" and "forgiveness." (BCP 848, 861)
- The children will learn to recite the General Confession in BCP. (BCP 331, 358)

### Question 6

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

### Goal

The children will understand that each is called to help spread the Gospel.  
Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20) (BCP 853, 855-57, 861-62, 865)

### Objectives

- The children will identify ways in which Jesus spread the Gospel (e.g., teaching, preaching, healing (Matt 4:23-25).
- The children will recall at least two parables of Jesus about proclaiming the Word. Examples:
  - the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:1-9, 18-23)
  - parables of the Kingdom (Mustard Seed - Matt 13:31-33, Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:18-21; Hidden Treasure – Matt 13:44-46; Net – Matt 13:47-52).
- The children will define “missionary” and give examples from the New Testament, particularly from Paul. Missionary:
  - **somebody doing church work abroad:**
  - somebody sent to another country by a church to spread its faith or to do social and medical work, or a
  - **persuader:** somebody who tries to persuade others to accept or join something.
- The children will define “Good News.” (A **gospel** (from Old English, *gōd spell* "[good news](#)") is a writing that describes the life, death, burial, and resurrection of [Jesus](#).)
- The children will express what the Good News means to them and explore ways it can be shared.
- The children will implement one of the foregoing ideas.



**Question 7**

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

**Goal**

The children will begin to answer God's personal call in their lives.

**Objectives**

- The children will explore and discuss needs within the parish and community.
- The children will tell stories about inclusion of outsiders from the Bible and elsewhere.
  - The Little Children: Matthew 19:13-15
  - A Man with Leprosy: Mark 1:40-42
  - The calling of Matthew(Levi) the Tax collector Mark 2:13-17
  - Zacchaeus the Tax Collector: Luke 19:1-10
  - The Samaritan Women: John 4:1-26
- The children will name ways they can love their neighbors.
- The children will visit other parishes, churches, and synagogues.

**Question 8**

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

The children will recognize their role in affirming the sanctity of life.

**Objectives**

- The children will read and discuss Form IV of the Prayers of the People. (BCP 388)
- The children will role-play examples of community and world problems and possible solutions.
- The children will discuss similarities and differences between people and how these affect our behavior. (BCP 846-47)
- The children will cite examples of how they treat friends and strangers.

## **JUNIOR HIGH**

### **Question 1**

Q. Do you believe in God the Father?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

### **Goal**

Early teens will understand and appreciate themselves as children of God. (BCP 845)

### **Objectives**

- The teens will tell the stories of creation
- The teens will discuss our relationship to God the Father as God's children through adoption and what it means to be God's chosen people. (BCP 846, 849-850)
- The teens will describe God's power, presence, and our knowledge of God in our lives and in history.
- The teens will discuss the covenant relationships in the Old Testament and New Testament. (BCP 846, 850)

## **Question 2**

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the

Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the

Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

(BCP 849-850)

## **Goal**

Early teens will understand the various roles of Jesus as the Son of God.

## **Objectives**

- The teens will discuss Jesus' role as the Messiah. (BCP 849, 850)
- The teens will discuss the Incarnation.
- The teens will tell the Passion story beginning at Palm Sunday and culminating with Good Friday, identifying key characters, places, and events.
- The teens will discuss the Resurrection and discuss one or more post-resurrection appearances (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:9-20; Luke 24:13-50; John Ch20; John Ch21).
- The teens will describe the story of the Ascension.
- The teens will discuss some of their own experiences of justice, mercy and grace, in the light of Gospel accounts of Jesus' justice(Matthew 25:31-46), mercy(Luke 5:17-26), and grace(John 14:1-7) . (BCP 858)

**Question 3**

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

**Goal**

Early teens will appreciate the working of the Holy Spirit and the manifold aspects of the Holy Spirit.

**Objectives**

- The teens will creatively express names or symbols of the Holy Spirit.
- The teens will list gifts/fruits of the Spirit and tell when they have experienced them.
- The teens will come to know the catholic, or universal, Church by visiting in congregations with traditions other than their own. (BCP 854)
- The teens will define the Communion of Saints and continue discussion of saints. (BCP 861-862)
- The teens will describe the concept and practice of forgiveness of sins. (The Lord's Prayer is the recommended starting point for this discussion.) (BCP 848, 861)

**Question 4**

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 859, 856)

**Goal**

Early teens will understand our heritage as a covenant people and appreciate our participation in the sacraments.

**Objectives**

- The teens will tell the story of the first Passover and the Exodus.
- The teens will compare the Passover meal with the Eucharist. (BCP 859)
- The teens will be able to discuss the seven sacraments of the Church. (BCP 857-861)
- The teens will discuss what prayer is and compose a personal prayer. (See Appendix IV – Types of Prayer.)
- The teens will participate in at least one activity or group in church.

**Question 5**

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, and repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 845, 848)

**Goal**

Early teens will understand sin as alienation from God and others and will appreciate God's forgiveness.

**Objectives**

- The teens will discuss and define what evil is and discuss ways to resist it.
- The teens will tell two or more Bible stories where people have repented. (Examples: Job, Peter, the sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50)
- The teens will list or act out the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) and their application to daily life.

**Question 6**

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

Early teens will investigate God's redeeming acts in history and begin to relate them to others. (BCP 853, 855-57, 861-62, 865)

**Objectives**

- The teens will define what the Good News of Christ is.
- The teens will role-play or discuss or creatively express ways in which they can proclaim the Good News.
- The teens will explore the Episcopal Church's use of the word "evangelism."
- The teens will identify one example of evangelism from the Acts of the Apostles.
- The teens will design and implement a way to evangelize through service to others.



**Question 7**

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

**Goal**

Early teens will recognize, love, and serve Christ in others.

**Objectives**

- The teens will recite and explain the **Shema** (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) and the Summary of the Law. (BCP 324)
- The teens will tell the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).
- The teens will explain their concepts of love and loving our "selves."
- The teens will identify their neighbor, and discuss what it means to be a neighbor.
- The teens will discuss that in judging/condemning our neighbor, our neighbor, we judge/condemn ourselves.
- The teens will discuss ways in which Jesus included others and how we can include others.
- The teens will engage in a form of outreach.

**Question 8**

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

Early teens will realize they are empowered to live in a way that enables others to recognize Christ in them.

**Objectives**

- The teens will discuss justice, peace and dignity. (BCP 846, 847)
- The teens will creatively explore two or more Bible stories where Jesus is just, brings peace, and respects the dignity of others. (Examples: Matthew 5:1-12 (The Beatitudes); Matthew 5:43-6:4; Mark 12:41-44; John 13:1-17)
- The teens will discuss how we can respect our differences. Among the topics that bear frequent repeating to all teens are:
  - Every person has intrinsic worth and dignity as a child of God. (Luke 12:1-47)
  - It is GOD Who lovingly created us. God defines who each of us is – NOT:
    - The opinions of peers
    - The clothes or makeup we wear
    - The cars we drive
    - How much money our family has
    - Where in the world we come from, or
    - What language we speak at home.

## SENIOR HIGH

### Question 1

Q. Do you believe in God the Father?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

### Goal

Late teens will understand God as Creator of all people and Creator of the entire universe, not just this world (“all that is, seen and unseen”).

### Objectives

- The teens will analyze, compare, and interpret the two Biblical creation stories in Genesis 1 and 2.
- The teens will be able to recite and demonstrate a working knowledge of the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed, and express their own belief in God in their own words.
- The teens will begin to address mysteries related to the nature of God and the limits to human understanding of such mysteries. Specifically, the teens will address:
  - The Holy Trinity
  - How an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal God allows Man to exercise free will
- The teens will be encouraged to raise whatever questions or doubts they have about the existence and nature of God.
- The teens will explore relationships of God with God’s people as revealed in the Old and New Testament. Examples:
  - God’s relationship with Adam and Eve
  - God’s relationship with the Israelites as His Chosen People
  - Jesus’ relationships with the different personalities among his Apostles and Disciples
  - Jesus’ one-on-one personal contacts with people to whom He ministered
- The teens will name and investigate contemporary issues arising from these stories (e.g., ecology, violence, poverty).
- The teens will identify differences in literary styles in different parts of the Scriptures.

## Question 2

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. (BCP 849-850)

## Goal

Late teens will develop their understanding of Jesus Christ and deepen their relationship with Christ through Scripture, spiritual disciplines and interacting with the Christian community.

## Objectives

- The teens will describe Jesus as healer, miracle-worker, prophet, and teacher using stories from the Gospels and relate these stories to their own lives. These specific incidents and parables are useful examples from the Gospels: John 2:1-11 Marriage feast at Cana; Luke 4:31-41 Exorcism and healing; Mark 10:17-25 Jesus teaches the rich young man; Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus' prophecies about the Last Judgment.
- The teens will be able to tell one of the parables (e.g., the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), one of the stories about healing, and one of the stories about feeding (such as Matthew 14:13-21), and relate each to their own faith experience.
- The teens will describe and interpret two stories from the Gospels that show Jesus reaching out to sinners and outcasts. (Example: Luke 7:36-50)
- The teens will identify and compare the Synoptic Gospels and differences between them and the Gospel of John.
- The teens will examine the critical doctrine of the dual nature of Christ, and its relationship to His saving act on the cross.
- The teens will examine the historical, spiritual and cultural context of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension and explore the implications of what they discover.
- The teens will describe and/or act out one or more resurrection appearance stories (e.g., Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene (Matthew 28:1-10), or His appearance to the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)) and identify the meanings in the stories.
- The teens will be able to explain the centrality of Jesus Christ's death, resurrection and ascension to the Christian faith.

### **Question 3**

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
(BCP 852)

### **Goal**

Late teens will expand their knowledge of the person and the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **Objectives**

- The teens will be able to explain significant signs of the work of the Holy Spirit as found in the Holy Scriptures, from Genesis through the Book of Revelation. To help the teens learn to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible, some useful starting points are:
  - the story of Pentecost (Acts 2)
  - Paul’s enumeration of the gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12)
- The teens will individually research and report on the life of one or more saints, as exemplars of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25).
- The teens will be able to share Jesus’ perspectives about the Spirit as Paraclete: sustainer, encourager, comforter, and source of wisdom (John 14:15-31 and John 15:26–16:15).
- The teens will discuss what “revelation” means.
- The teens will develop a working knowledge of what the Holy Trinity is and its importance to the Christian faith (Matthew 28:19-20).

**Question 4**

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 859, 856)

**Goal**

Late teens will understand our heritage as a covenant people and how the sacraments are signs of God's presence with us.

**Objectives**

- The teens will understand their own place in the historical developments of the Christian Church.
- The teens will participate regularly in the faith community worship and fellowship.
- The teens will practice a personal discipline of prayer and develop their own Rule of Life.
- The teens will experience multiple kinds of prayer (e.g., corporate prayer at public worship, contemplative prayer in silence, and meditative prayer on Scripture). (See Appendix IV – Types of Prayer)
- The teens will be able to name and explain the significance of the seven sacraments and of the Church.
  - In particular, the teens will be able to explain the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist (BCP 857-861; BCP 872-874; I Corinthians 11:23-32)
- The teens will help plan or participate in a youth fellowship event.

### **Question 5**

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 845, 848)

### **Goal**

Late teens will learn to recognize sin as the alienation from the need for forgiveness.

### **Objectives**

- The teens will cite examples from Scripture, film, literature, and history to illustrate the power of evil and the power of good. (See Appendix III, the Bibliography of Reference Materials.)
- The teens will practice techniques both for resisting and making appropriate use of peer pressure.
- The teens will address critical issues related to free will, and face the fact of sin in their own lives, as well as communal sin. God has truly made man's will free, which means:
  - We are free to refuse His grace. (Romans Ch.6)
  - We are completely responsible as individuals when we do that (not Mom, not Dad, not "the mean old English teacher").
  - God is under no obligation to stop us from doing something terribly stupid or dangerous to ourselves or others. (2 Samuel Ch. 11)
  - We are free to choose our own will over God's. Whatever souls populate Hell are those who have CHOSEN to be there because, like John Milton's Satan, they insist on their own will over God's. (Philippians 3:17-21)
- The teens will understand the reconciliation of the penitent as reconciliation with God and each other.
- The teens will express in their own words the meaning of the confession from Morning Prayer or the Eucharist. (BCP 848, 861)
- The teens will develop an awareness and practice of forgiveness by forgiving someone who has wronged them and accepting forgiveness from one they have wronged. (BCP 848, 861)

**Question 6**

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

Late teens will learn to take greater responsibility for interpreting their faith to others and to recognize that their lives are supposed to express their identity as Christians.

(BCP 853, 855-57, 861-62, 865)

**Objectives**

- The teens will identify at least three key aspects of Jesus' ministry to use as a model for their own ministries.
- The teens will explore the ways the Church expresses the Good News through the arts, liturgy, sacraments, music, service and fellowship.
- The teens will be able to explain what the Good News is. (John 3:16-17)
- The teens will be able to explain the Good News in their lives.
- The teens will bring up the questions that others ask them about Christianity in general and the Anglican faith in particular.
- The teens will begin to learn how to answer these questions, by applying reason and knowledge of church traditions to what the Scriptures reveal.



**Question 7**

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

**Goal**

The teens will learn what it means to see Christ in others and learn to love themselves and others.

**Objectives**

- The teens will develop a personal spiritual discipline that will help them to see Christ in others.
- The teens will design, implement, and participate in a community service project.
- The teens will identify their gifts for ministry and explore ways to use these gifts.
- The teens will examine multiple Biblical stories that address the issues of acceptance and rejection (e.g., Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and Cornelius the Centurion (Acts 10:1-33)) and relate it to their own lives.

### Question 8

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help.

### Goal

The teens will learn that they are challenged to live in a way that enables others to see Jesus in them, and that God's grace empowers them to do so.

### Objectives

- The teens will examine the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) from the perspective of justice, peace, and the dignity of every human being and relate them to their own lives. (See also the Prayers of the People (BCP 383-393).)
- The teens will examine a contemporary ethical issue in the light of one or more of the Hebrew prophets, such as Jeremiah, Amos, Micah. (See Appendix V – Chronology of the Old Testament Prophets)
- The teens will examine multiple parables of Jesus and relate them to contemporary issues, such as care of society's most vulnerable and needy members, and stewardship of the environment.
  - Parables of the sower, the weeds, and the net (Matthew Ch.13)
  - The lost sheep, the unmerciful servant (Matthew Ch. 18)
  - The workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)
  - The tenants, the wedding banquet (Matthew 21:33-22:14)
  - The ten virgins, the talents (Matthew Ch. 25)
  - The sower, the growing seed, the mustard seed (Mark Ch.4)
  - The wise and foolish builders (Luke 6:46-49)
  - The good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
  - The rich fool (Luke 12:13-21)
  - The great banquet (Luke 14:15-24)
  - The lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son (Luke Ch. 15)
  - The wise steward (Luke 16:1-13)
  - The persistent widow; the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke Ch.18)
  - The ten minas (Luke 19:11-27)
  - The Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18)

## ADULT LEVEL

### Question 1

Q. Do you believe in God the Father?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

### Goal

Adults will come to understand God's good creation of the universe, both the seen material elements and the unseen spiritual world (angels). They will also come to understand that all of creation's problems can be traced back to the fall which took place after creation.

### Objectives

- Adults will relate the salient points of God's good creation, the fall and how this applies to their own lives.
- Adults will demonstrate their understanding of the effects of sin and also their concern for God's creation through stewardship of the created order, of their own resources, and of their own persons.

### Scripture References

- Genesis 1:1-31
- John 1:1-14

## **Question 2**

Q. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

A. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead (BCP 849-850).

## **Goal**

Adults will come to understand why God had to become man so that he might die in order to save humanity. They will obtain a grasp of the mysteries of Jesus life, and the purpose behind his crucifixion, resurrection, and why he ascended into heaven. They will be able to explain his coming again and the Last Judgment

## **Objectives**

- Adults need to be able to clearly state the doctrine of the dual nature of Christ, and discuss it in some detail.
- Adults will proclaim by word and example the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- Adults will articulate the connection between their relationship with Jesus and their life in the world.
- Adults will summarize the basic beliefs about Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture and interpreted by tradition and reason.

## **Scripture References**

- Mt 1:18-25 “This is how the birth of Jesus came about...”
- Luke 1:26-38 “In the sixth month God sent the angel Gabriel...”
- John 18:28-40 “Then the Jews led Jesus...”
- Mt 27:11-26 “Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor...”
- Mk 15:1-15 “They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate...”
- Mk 15:37-39 “With a loud cry...”
- Mk 16: 19 “he was taken up into heaven”
- John 20:17 “Jesus said ‘don’t hold onto me...’
- Mt 28:1-10 “After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week...”
- John 14: 8-10 “I am in the Father and the Father is in me”
- John 14:6-7 I am the way, the truth, the life...
- John 1:29 John saw Jesus...”Look, the Lamb of God who..
- John1:34 I testify that this is the son of God
- John 6:29 The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent

### **Question 3**

Q. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

A. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting (BCP 852).

### **Goal**

Adults will come to understand who the Holy Spirit is and how he acts in the world. They will be able to describe what is meant by the holiness and catholicity of the Church, how the communion of saints work together, the Church's authority to forgive sins, the imperishable bodies that we will receive, and what is meant by heaven.

### **Objectives**

- Adults will identify, develop, and practice their gifts for ministry. (BCP 855-856)

### **Scripture References**

- John 14:26 The Advocate will teach you everything
- John 15: 7-11 I must go for the Advocate to come to you
- Romans 5:5 God's love poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit
- Mt 6:5-15 When you pray...
- Mark 16:15 Go into all the world...

#### **Question 4**

Q. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 859, 856)

#### **Goal**

Adults will come to recognize more fully their participation in the community of faith as sharing in the Body of Christ.

#### **Objectives**

- Adults will participate in the study of Scripture, history and other aspects of our Judaeo-Christian heritage. (BCP 853)
- Adults will adopt a rule of life for spiritual growth through prayer, study, and participation in community life.
- Adults will attend church every Sunday, unless sick or out of town.
- Adults will understand the meaning and importance of the sacraments, especially Holy Communion and the Real Presence, as compared to other denominations' beliefs about Holy Communion. (BCP 857, 858, 859, 860, 861)
- Adults will contribute time, talent, and treasure for the work of the Church.

#### **Scripture References**

- Luke 11:2 "When you pray say: Father, hallowed be your name..."
- John 6: 54 "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life & I will raise him up"
- John 15: 1 "I am the true vine..."
- Mt 26:26 "Take and eat, this is my body..."

**Question 5**

Q. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 845, 848)

**Goal**

Adults will come to recognize sin as a condition of human life and the need for being forgiven and forgiving others. They will come to understand the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Objectives**

- Adults will practice regular self-examination, repentance, and be encouraged in to partake of the confession of sins through the Sacrament of Confession.
- Adults will make conscious attempts at reconciliation with others from whom they have been estranged.
- (BCP 853, 855-57, 861-62, 826)

**Scripture References**

- Luke 15: 7 “ more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents...”
- Acts 2:38 “Repent and be baptized...”
- Acts 17:30 “he commands all people everywhere to repent...”

**Question 6**

Q. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

Adults will more fully understand evangelism as an integral part of Christian living.

**Objectives**

- Adults will live out the Good News in their homes and workplaces.
- Adults will engage others in conversations about their faith.
- Adults will name significant Biblical people, places, events, and perspectives in order to discuss them with others.
- Adults will express Christian faith in a secular world.

**Scripture References**

- Mt 28: 19-20 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...”
- Mark 16: 15 “Go into all the world and preach...”
- John 20: 21 “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you...”



**Question 7**

Q. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A. I will, with God's help.

(BCP 847, 850, 852)

**Goal**

Adults will come to treat each person as a child of God, made in his image.

**Objectives**

- Adults will share in a specific ministry of the church either to members or non-members.
- Adults will display neighborly affection and service.
- Adults will recognize within themselves any prejudices that they have developed over the course of their lives and face those prejudices and reach out for God's grace to eliminate them from their thinking.

**Scripture References**

- Mt 22: 37-40 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself..."

**Question 8**

Q. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

A. I will, with God's help.

**Goal**

Adults will come to understand their lives in Christ in relation to the world community.

**Objectives**

- Adults will use their resources to alleviate economic, political, and social suffering, not only in their community, but also around the world.
- Adults will participate in parochial, diocesan, provincial, and/or National church programs involving issues of justice and peace.

**Scripture References**

- Matthew 22:37-40..."Love your neighbor as yourself..."
- Matthew 25:31-46..."whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for Me."

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The Committee thanks the Diocese of Arkansas for permission to adapt the content of these two Developmental outlines (Appendices I and II) from Nurturing the Body of Christ, guidelines written for Christian Education in that diocese in 1991.

## **AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN**

### **Early Childhood through Kindergarten**

**(Ages 2 – 5)**

#### **TWO YEAR OLDS**

- Experience God's love through their relationship with adults in the church.
- Are in a period of rapid growth.
- Learn through senses (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste)
- Cannot share well; good at parallel play, but cannot play well with another child for long.
- Like music and motion; attracted to the activities and beauty of the church services.
- Enjoy the process of making things more than valuing the final product..
- Are very curious; older twos begin to ask "why and should be taken seriously.
- Are developing large motor skills; climbing, standing, walking, jumping.
- Imitate through relationships.
- Are developing trust.
- Can recite simple prayers (i.e., thank you, God, for..)
- Are moving from complete dependency to a need for independence.

#### **THREE YEAR OLDS**

- Experience God's love through their relationship with adults in the church.
- Have developed large and some small motor skills.
- Are in a period of slower growth.
- Like dramatic play and pretend games.
- Begin to understand sharing and taking turns; still hard to give up what they want.
- Learn by doing (color, paint, paste, clay, with lots of space and large paper), repetition and through senses.
- Are developing language skills.
- Have short attention spans.
- Can begin to identify characters in Bible stories.
- Gain self-worth through accomplishments.
- Begin to grasp God's love for themselves and the world around them.
- Experience rapid mood change.
- Are honest about their emotions.
- Are willing to try new things.

#### **FOUR AND FIVE YEAR OLDS**

- Are in a period of rapid growth.
- Fine motor skills (coloring, cutting, etc.) are developing while large motor skills have improved but are still important.
- Are fascinated by words; ask lots of questions, “why, how,” mostly to practice speech and listening; these questions should be taken seriously.
- Begin to identify adult roles in their life; (i.e., teacher, priest, friends and family).
- Develop specific friends by five.
- Are self-assured, tactful, cooperative and easy to please by five.
- Enjoy music and rhythm.
- Are experiencing an emotional seesaw; art pretending and play allow for expression of feelings.
- Are developing independence but need help and encouragement.
- Like brief Bible stories and prayers.
- Develop large attention spans – can sit longer and move quickly from one activity to another.
- Learn by experience and repetition.
- Can recognize symbols on a printed page.
- Apply literal interpretation to stories, experiences, etc.
- Begin to feel love; see evidence of God’s love in nature and through others.
- Can learn of Jesus as a real person.
- Have a need to participate in their religious community.
- Learn through “play” and pretend games – tend to make up their own rules.
- Like to be helpful.
- Are protective toward brothers and sisters.

**AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN**

**Primary  
(Grades 1 – 3)**

**SIX YEAR OLDS**

Are very active; still developing muscle skills – whole body is involved in everything they do.

Like responsibility; need praise, encouragement, understanding.

Want to be first, the leader and win; like group activities, but will quit if things do not go their way.

Like to tell their stories.

Just beginning to read.

Are self-centered, aggressive, competitive, less cooperative than when younger.

Model emotions after their significant others.

**SEVEN YEAR OLDS**

Are less active with spurts of activity and beginning to develop small muscle skills.

Enjoy art activities, but results may be clumsy.

Are subject to frequent illnesses – tire easily.

Feel good about their newly acquired skills in reading and writing.

Are upset by their inability to match the abilities of older children.

Are curious and eager to learn but find it difficult to distinguish between an imaginative story and an untruth.

Are beginning to develop a conscience; aware of the difference between right and wrong.

Are beginning “best friends” relationships.

Are competitive and want to be liked by the other boys and girls.

Are able to see other points of view.

Have better control of emotions, but still express them openly.

### **AT SIX AND SEVEN, CHILDREN**

Enjoy touching, handling, exploring materials.

Learn from things they are familiar with and through repetition.

Think of God in terms of his attributes.

Can understand that Jesus is a special person who told about God (but can't understand his relationship to God).

Understand the Bible is a special book that tells us about God and Jesus.

Have better control of emotions, but still express them openly.

Start setting goals that are too high and worry about mistakes.

Show curiosity, fear and disappointment.

To help nurture the six and seven year old child in a Sunday School environment, teachers should.

Keep in mind their level of activity when planning.

Allow for exploration in an atmosphere of love and acceptance.

Use concrete familiar and specific situations (don't use analogies).

Use repetition, encouragement and praise.

Give opportunities for both group and individual activities.

Encourage relationships.

Allow activities they can do on their own.

Be a good listener.

### **EIGHT AND NINE YEAR OLDS**

Are half way between childhood and adulthood and no longer look like little children.

Like to mimic adults.

Are selective in choice of friends and clubs; very loyal to friends.

Love organized play; their play is serious work.

Find satisfaction in being able to do things demanded of them.

Are eager, curious learners; read well, but write sloppily.

Are developing a sense of time and space.

Have better control of bodies than younger children; more co-coordinated.

Are speculative about growing up; are anxious about pressure of uncertain, turbulent world.

Can be trusted.

**EIGHT AND NINE YEAR OLDS – CONTINUED**

Are beginning to ask many questions beyond what they can touch and see.

Can worship God alone or in a group.

Are in a concrete level but are beginning to understand abstract ideas.

Like to join in conversation.

Have developed a longer attention span.

Are interested in other cultures.

Are developing self-worth and are critical of their own work.

Are limited by actual experiences.

Gather facts at eight; interpret facts at nine.

Enjoy simple narratives.

Are interested in mechanics of Bible – short passages.

Need to belong and want to be grown up.

Are hostile to male and female relations; sometimes are cruel to others.

Please teacher at eight; are group-oriented at nine.

Talk with peers and not so much to adults.

Are independent but need guidance.

To nurture the eight and nine year old child in a Sunday School environment, teacher might keep in mind to:

Give more responsibilities but clear directions.

Remember they learn best when actively involved.

Be accepting of all children and recognize individual differences and affirm them.

Remember they need to know the teacher as a person.



### **TEN AND ELEVEN YEAR OLDS**

- Are on the move and very active; have excess energy.
- Are beginning to live in two worlds, family and peers.
- Are developing genuine friendships, and susceptible too peer pressure.
- Are generally segregated by sexes; but can be affectionate with both sexes.
- Hold high standards of conduct; know but do not always do what is right.
- Poke fun at authority figures.
- Are beginning the struggle for independence.
- Trust anyone who appears worthy of trust.
- Are eager to gain sense of personal competence – want to do things well.
- Value justice more than love, hate sentimentality.
- Anxious to belong to groups (family, club, school, team, Church, country).
- Experience growth at various rates; girls mature faster.
- Are eager to learn.
- Are capable of serious individualized study; can be totally absorbed in projects.
- Understand symbols.
- Can have deep religious feelings.
- Value being a part of church family – like to participate.
- Enjoy history, geography and culture in the Bible.
- Can be exuberant and cooperative.
- See heroes as important.
- Have a great need for attention.
- See status symbols as important and peer approval very important.
- Are competitive.

Teachers in the Sunday School class will help to nurture the intermediate age child by:

- Keeping a good sense of humor, patience and concern for all children.
- Change the pace of activities often.
- Ignore their clumsiness.
- Help them to re-group if they become too competitive.
- Plan for creative outlets such as writing, acting, etc.
- Listen to and share with them.

**AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE**  
**JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**  
**(Grades 7 – 9)**

**TWELVE YEAR OLDS**

- Are developing personal identity through others.
- Place great importance on close peer relations.
- Are developing an active social life.
- Are beginning formal, abstract thinking.
- Have a growing interest in a wide range of subjects; can be challenged intellectually.
- Need strong adult models.
- See God as helper and friend.
- Like teamwork activities.
- Are open, eager enthusiastic and restless.
- Perceive their own future dimly.
- Experience a period of rapid growth.
- Can be responsive in discussion, but chief desire is to do something.
- Will accept directions from adults, but take advantage of a too permissive leader.
- Have a keen interest in religious and moral questions.
- Beginning awareness of boy/girl relationships in earnest.
- Place importance on Church if parents value it.

### **THIRTEEN YEAR OLDS**

- Are careful, inward, silent, reflective.
- Need privacy; year of hibernation.
- Worry a lot about school and popularity.
- Want to be regarded as more grown up.
- Are undergoing obvious physical development.
- Place great importance on friends; won't share confidences easily.
- Have lots of energy, busy in many directions.
- Can sit more quietly than before.
- Begin to test how authority will respond to the shocking things they have to offer.
- Sense a mystery in relationships between sexes.
- Continue to be interested in Church and are fascinated by theological questions.
- Are confronted by decisions about school.
- Are ready to work out a "point of view".
- Can find their place in the story of faith.
- Can explore the meaning of worship.

### **FOURTEEN YEAR OLDS**

- Are expansive, more secure, open, accepting, pleasant, almost grown up.
- Are experiencing a plateau year, glad to be 14; love living.
- Like the opposite sex better than they did –physical intimacies begin to occur.
- Still consider the school as the center of their experience.
- Are more respectful of adults; need strong adult role models.
- Have a fear of not belonging.
- Are intensely interested in questions about behavior and conduct; everything is not black and white.
- Begin to test values and develop their own.
- Begin the searching faith process – may question the Church and its teachings.
- Employ attention-getting devices (drinking and smoking) to make up for a poor self image.

**AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Senior High School**

**(Grades 10 -12)**

**FIFTEEN YEAR OLDS**

Can make abstract connections between abstract ideas.

Can apply meanings of Bible to life and explore faith together.

Are beginning to think about vocation.

Are continuing the searching faith process.

Often experience fifteen year old slump, are self – critical.

Are trying to straighten out thought and feeling – are introspective.

Say they don't care, and look like they don't – very apathetic.

Don't want to go places with family.

Need other understanding adults as sounding boards; are eager for relationships with other adults besides parents.

Sense that relationship between sexes can be very serious, conversations between boys and girls begin to be grown up.

Can sit quietly, more reserved.

Can manage responsibility and desire to do so.

Question all authority.

Know that not every situation can be labeled “good” or “bad”.

Become disillusioned easily with themselves and the world; life will never be the same as they leave their childhood behind; know they have to grow up but want time out to think about it.

Are beginning to see the responsibilities, anxieties, realities of adulthood.

May see the Church as less important; therefore this is a good time for discussions, retreats, and service projects to help them make religious decisions.

### **SIXTEEN YEAR OLDS**

Are self-assured-think they have arrived.

Welcome discipline if it seems fair.

Want to cope with own life and problems.

Delight in boy-girl relationships.

See the future as a serious matter pressing on them.

Begin to identify with adults.

Begin to exert pressure on themselves and cannot be instructed as before, but as a genuine pre-adult; programs must recognize their need for equality in relationship with adult leaders.

May see God as friend and confidant.

Begin to bridge gap between personal faith and Church's beliefs.

### **SEVENTEEN YEAR OLDS**

See adults as worthy of respect and affection.

Are concerned about younger siblings – full of advice.

See social life as important and relationships between sexes as more serious.

Begin to focus on future.

Can explore faith together.

Are not so dependent on acceptance of certain people, are more relaxed and pleasant.

Must have significant responsibility and recognition to stay in the life of the Church.

Want to plan and execute most of their activities.

Are interested in colleges and vocations.

Are very busy.

## **THE FAITH JOURNEY: Stages of Human Development**

We are all aware that children grow physically through a number of stages. They also develop through several stages that include personality, logical reasoning, social perspective, moral reasoning, and faith development. The researchers whose work we have relied upon to prepare materials for different age levels are:

Jean Piaget	stages of logical and cognitive development
Eric Erikson	stages of ego development
Mary Wilcox	stages of social perspective
Laurence Kohlberg	stages of moral reasoning
James Fowler	stages of development

There are several basic principles which have been derived from these researchers that have provided the point of view described by these statements:

- There is no fixed age to enter or leave any stage. The stages occur in sequence. Individuals may vary in the length of time in each stage, but they do not skip stages.
- Children of the same age and school grade may be in different stages of development. The changes in logical reasoning and cognitive patterns are the bases on which other stages come in to being.
- Adults can be found in stages which are more typical of younger persons. This is true especially of stages of moral reasoning and faith development. According to Erikson's stages of ego development, a crisis in one's life can catapult an adult back into earlier stages.
- While there is evidence that children are developing faster today in social and cultural terms, there is no evidence that their cognitive development and moral reasoning are developing faster. There is some evidence that creativity and imagination may be stifled by the passivity of television viewing. This may have a retarding effect in the onset of higher cognitive skills.
- Religious education involves the whole person, not the intellect alone. Religious concepts must be developed through confluent education, in which knowledge and affect are both central to the learner's experience. Lesson planning must seek to involve feelings, emotions, values, the inner being of the learners, as well as their intellect and their behavior.

### **THE PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN CHILD**

These children are not mini-adults. Their thought processes have an entirely different from those of adults and even of older children.

Sally is a Kindergarten child. Between ages three and seven or eight, Sally thinks in a pre-logical fashion. She tends to focus on one aspect of a situation at a time. Sally cannot reverse a thought process; cause and effective relationships are merely descriptive of what she has perceived. It is very difficult for her to separate fact and fantasy. Dreams may be very real to her; she may have an imaginary playmate; she tends to think magically or to be satisfied with her own magical explanation of events. (“The sky is there because God painted it blue.” Her burning question is “What amazing thing will happen next?”)

This young child’s world is centered on herself and includes mainly her parents and her immediate family. Others may drift in and out of her world, but the child does not clearly see what relationship they have to her. Sally relates to others by obeying these who are bigger than se – primarily out of a fear of punishment. She tends to judge the wrongness of a deed by its visible consequence, and she reasons the greater the consequences, the greater should be the punishment.

The magical quality of Sally’s thinking at this stage of development leads her to see a symbol as identical with what it represents. The child understands the bread of the Holy Communion to be the Body of Christ and may think that the minister is God. Sally’s faith is intuitive and imitative. Her world vision is a kaleidoscope of beliefs and images she has been given by her parents, her teachers, her own imaginative ideas, and her own experiences. There are strong elements both of love and fear built into her world vision. As she grows older, the changes in her cognitive abilities – the way her mind functions – will lead her faith and her vision of the world to another level.

### **TEACHING PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN**

Your primary task as Sally’s teacher is to “be” God’s love for her. You are the message! This is both a comfort and a challenge. The comfort comes from knowing that Sally needs most to be loved, to be valued where she is in her development, to be listened to – even to her imaginative tales. The challenge is in giving yourself permission to do what the children need without attempting those things that are beyond their understanding. For example, rarely can a child of this age begin to grasp the viewpoint of others. That means there is no point in asking Sally, “How do you think the man felt when he was healed?” Since Sally sees a symbol as being what it represents, she cannot grasp a parallel or comparison between a symbolic story such as a parable or an allegory and a moral truth. For Sally the truth is: It does not mean!

The general rule for teaching children like Sally is to provide a safe and loving environment in which there is some freedom. This may be the freedom to choose an activity for free playtime, freedom to participate or not, freedom to be listened to, and above all freedom to be valued. It may include letting Sally choose when to move on to another activity. If everyone wants a turn to be “it” in a game, or if the children are happy finger painting, that activity should continue – even if the songs are left out for one Sunday. The measure of your “success” as a teacher is not in the information you have imparted, for what you are really doing is putting a variety of ideas and feelings into Sally’s mental “computer.” Others will build on what you have begun. If Sally learns that your classroom is where love is, you have been a crowning success in teaching.

### THE PRIMARY CHILD

Recent studies indicate that children pass through a definable series of stages in the kind of mental processes they use, in their view of the world and their place in it, and in moral reasoning and faith development. A teacher needs to be aware that these changes are taking place and to have some idea of what is involved. The Primary child is not a mini-adult! The child's thought processes are different in kind from those of adults and older children.

During the years that Jim, a Primary boy, is in grades one through three he is making a transition from one mindset to another. In grade one, Jim thinks in a pre-logical and magical way about the world. By grade three, Jim very likely will be moving into the next stage of cognitive development, beginning logical thought. Jim can deal only with events and ideas within his own experience. During these years, he may have difficulty separating fact from fantasy. Soon, however, he may be able to make such a separation based on his own practical experience. Even then, he may still cherish a private world of wonder and fantasy. During the primary years Jim will gradually develop an ability to understand cause and effect, and be able to reverse a thought process. For example, he can retrace his movement through a day in order to locate his lost mittens. He will experience a change from a magical explanation of events towards a way of fitting new information into a framework closer to physical reality. For example, he can fit an eclipse of the moon into his knowledge of shadows and light.

Jim's world has grown to include the neighborhood, the school, and the church. He tends to move out of obedience to those who are bigger into willingness to work with other persons who can be of use to him. For instance, he learns that it takes two to make a seesaw work. Jim begins to grow out of the idea that he is the center of his world and to see that others may have a separate and independent viewpoint from his own – a viewpoint which, however, Jim will make little effort to grasp. He also moves from obeying authority (such as his parents and teachers) because of fear of punishment toward obeying in hope of receiving a reward.

From ages six to eight Jim may begin to move from seeing symbols as identical with what they represent towards a more literal interpretation of symbols, one in which the symbol refers to something specific in Jim's concrete experience. For example, images of God are highly anthropomorphic at this stage of development, and the Bible is a book of stories about Jesus, David, Noah, and others. Jim cannot see the Bible as God's Word or as a guide to life. Jim's faith development is primarily intuitive and imitative during these years. As he moves into a literal understanding of symbols he will also move towards a new level of faith development. His new ability to find practical ideas from observations of specific events to predict probable patterns leads him toward a more orderly view of his world. He then begins to move towards what may be called affiliate faith – "our family goes to St. John's Church."



### **TEACHING PRIMARY CHILDREN**

The first priority of the teacher of Primary age children like Jim is to be the expression of God’s love for them. Remember that you are the message. “But,” we hear you say, “they have so much to learn: I have so much to teach them.” That is true, but at the stage of development where you find Jim in primary years, he needs to learn through his own experiences. Your role should be to lead him into experiences through which faith can be caught, not taught.

This means that stories, games, songs, arts and crafts are not the seasoning that makes the lessons palatable. They are the lesson. For example, the concept of the Kingship of Christ is not within Jim’s experiences; but a parade in honor of Jesus our King teaches him that Jesus is important. Try to resist all temptation to explain or to ask Jim to try to explain, the religious significance of a story, the concept they are to learn from a game, or the meaning of the words in a song. Mary Wilcox in her book *Developmental Journey*, says, “There is some indication that pressuring a child with stimuli before the mind is ready may create a prejudice against that type of information in the future.” You can know that the game is designed to increase a spirit of cooperation or that the little bird in the story might represent our struggle to obey God’s will, but let that be your secret.

Jim needs to experience God’s love and acceptance through you. You convey this when you love the children, when you accept them where they are (no stage of development is better than another). You demonstrate this acceptance when you take the time to listen to what Jim is telling you. If Jim senses at the end of the year that love was in your classroom, you have been a great success as a teacher.

### **THE INTERMEDIATE CHILD**

In recent years, much research has been carried on in an attempt to classify the stages through which children pass in their intellectual, social, moral and faith development. The most important finding for teachers to understand is that Intermediate children are not “inexperienced adults,” but that their mental processes, their view of the world, and their understanding of symbols are significantly different from those of adults.

Susan is a child of Intermediate age, moving through grades four, five, and six. She thinks by reasoning about things which are part of her experience. She does not reason with abstractions such as love or goodness. Susan can figure out causes for observed results; she can make a generalization to account for observed patterns and use this to predict results; she makes classifications based on the physical characteristics of objects but she needs to see it in order to believe it.

Susan is industrious; in fact, her sense of self-worth is in proportion to her ability to do real tasks. She tends to keep mental ledger sheets showing entries for skills learned and useful tasks performed. She values others according to how useful they are to her. For example, Susan sees the Golden Rule as a way to get people to do what she wants and a way to pay back others who treat her badly. She has come to see that others may have a point of view and a set of needs which may be different from hers. This leads her to believe that people in authority are thereby serving their own needs. She may say, “Oh, he wants to be a big shot.” Susan can, however, accept the authority of people she trusts and those who have earned her respect because of ability; she obeys because she expects rewards.

Symbols for Susan must refer to something specific, although the specific may be an imaginative idea. Many children of this age have an image of God as being a ruler or boss, then later picture God more as lawgiver or judge. At this stage Susan takes on the beliefs stories, and observances that belong to her community. She gives the beliefs and stories a literal interpretation and adopts attitudes and rules rather uncritically. Children may begin to move out of this stage by ages 11 and 12, although for some the transition starts much later. It is only different from the others.

### **TEACHING INTERMEDIATE CHILDREN**

Susan and other children of the Intermediate grades are a delight to teach. Their industriousness and their strong need to belong lead them to be motivated to learn the ideas and practices of their group and produce visible and tangible results. Susan should be able to read short passages from the Bible and to discuss these on a non-abstract level. Her interpretations will, of course, be shaped by her own reasoning processes. Teachers should resist the urge to correct her interpretations. Knowing this is how she thinks and where she is can enable you to be tolerant of the one-dimensional view that she holds. Time is on your side; she will soon move to more abstract reasoning. It is best not to think of one stage being better than another; each is necessary in order for the next to arise.

Susan needs to feel accepted, loved and safe in the classroom. Like all Intermediate children, she needs very much to belong to the group and, if she feels she is treated fairly, will happily make a real contribution to the class. She will enjoy having some latitude in choosing activities and in sharing with the congregation as a whole. Two good guidelines for teaching this age are to see and love them as children of God and to listen and respect their confidences, their opinions, and their efforts.

### **THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT**

Dave's Junior High years are as difficult for him while going through them as for those who love and care for him. As an early adolescent, Dave is bombarded by the rapid changes taking place in his body, in his mind, and through his widening contacts with people. It is a time of tremendous self-consciousness and struggle as Dave seeks an answer to the question "Who am I?" Dave will build what others think of him into a vision of his own identity. This dependence on others leads to an acceptance of the values, actions, and beliefs of his peer group. Dave finds himself in many "peer groups" – family, neighborhood church, and school, club – whose evaluation of him and expectations of him may differ significantly. As a typical Junior High person Dave may deal with these conflicting signals by compartmentalizing – doing what is expected of him by the group he is with at the time – or by giving one's group's evaluation first consideration making all others subordinate to it.

By the ages of 11 or 12 most children reach the early stages of formal logical thinking. They can classify, make hypotheses, and interpret without needing concrete data as the substance of their thoughts. These skills enable Dave to construct a reasonably coherent picture of the world. The typical young person of this age may have a set of beliefs and values on which he may act and which he may defend. These beliefs, however, usually conform to what his valued group believes. It would also be possible for Dave to accept the values of a trusted role model – even an adult! This challenges his teachers to try to become his role models. Such a person is one who has real faith and is willing to share it sincerely and openly.

### Junior High Continued –

The moral reasoning of many Junior High students is based on their need for approval from those who are significant to them. This is the earliest stage at which good intentions are considered in evaluating moral behaviors. If someone blunders but “means well,” this is seen as acceptable. Dave will tend to seek approval by doing what is expected of him in the situation he is in at the moment. On the other hand, Dave may continue to make his moral decisions on the basis of fairness and self-interest, in a similar fashion to Susan, for several years. He may continue to seek rewards for good behavior.

Like most adolescents, Dave can be friends with and appreciate individuals who are not members of his in-group, but in general he would tend to classify other groups in stereotypes or with conventional biases. He cannot put himself in the place of someone else whose values are significantly different from his own.

Dave, and most Junior High students, has made a step forward in their understanding of symbols; he no longer needs for these to refer to something concrete. He may comprehend several levels of meaning for a symbol but cannot truly separate the symbol from the meaning. For example, Dave would probably feel that to desecrate the Bible would be to desecrate the meaning it symbolizes. Many young people of this age think that the Bible is a guide to right living and to becoming a loving person; they do not invest it with a higher meaning – the Word of God, for example.

Students like Dave typically hold values and beliefs which are a consensus among people who count with him. His faith is both conformist and dependent. We know that Dave will continue to develop as his cognitive skills – the way his mind works – continue to develop. He will pass successfully through this difficult period in his life. He will reach a more mature self-image, and more stable relationships with others and a more coherent understanding of the world around him. He does, however, need loving guidance to bring him a faith level that truly represents his own values and beliefs. It is a fact that many adults continue to operate with a dependent, conformist faith and make moral choices based on what others think. The teacher who allows Dave to question, to search, and to doubt, is laying the foundation for Dave to achieve a faith that is his own.

### **TEACHING JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS**

Junior High people like Dave are both frustrating and charming to teach. They need above all else a class that is safe and accepting. They need to have confidence that what they say in class will not go beyond the walls of that room. They need to be loved, accepted, and helped to love and accept themselves. They need experiences that help them find out who they are, what they think and feel about many things, and what they believe.

You will most of all want to develop eyes that see a reflection of Christ in the face of each of your students. At this difficult period of his life, few people are seeing Dave this way – yet he needs this now more than ever. The teacher must accept his strengths and limitation; see him as a valuable person. Really listen to what he says and give honest answers to his questions. Saying, “I don’t know, but let’s try to find out” is a very important answer to give young people like Dave.

Junior High students especially need someone to listen to the questioning they do. You will more likely be confronted with statements such as “I don’t believe that because...” You need to allow the students freedom to express such opinions even if they are contrary to your beliefs or even to the teachings of the Church. It is not helpful to say, “You must believe.” Your role should rather be that of faith-sharer. Young adolescents need role models. Seeing their teacher as a person who has faith, and is comfortable about sharing it, is crucial at this age.

Junior High Continued –

The teacher should view his or her role as being a facilitator rather than an instructor. Learn and work right along with Dave in his activities. Laugh with him, pray with him and for him; trust him and let him come to know and trust you. Above all, love and enjoy him!

### **THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT**

The High School years, from age 15 or 16 to age 18 are a period of transition in all areas of development. Beth, as a young person of 15 or 16, still is searching for her identity, and probably is still finding it through peer groups within which she operates. She reconciles the different expectations of her that different groups hold by compartmentalizing – doing what is expected of her by the group she is with at the time – or by giving one group’s evaluation first consideration and making all others subordinate to it. Beth, at this stage, derives her beliefs and values from her peer groups, although she may hold these beliefs strongly, defending them and trying to live by them. Her need for approval from significant others is the basis for most of her moral decisions at this stage. She respects the authority of leaders among her peers and also of idealized role models. These perspectives combine to indicate a level of faith development that is dependent and conformist in its quality.

There is usually rapid growth in cognitive skills during the High School years. All processes of logical thought develop and can operate on abstractions, no longer needing to refer to concrete situations. Two thought processes in particular shape the thinking at this age: dichotomizing, cutting in two (or more) parts those ideas which contradict each other – and a growing understanding that law is an abstraction that can create an orderly system of relationships among people. These new cognitive skills lead the way towards a more or less coherent concept of persons and society – a system that the young person constructs – which is bounded by laws, rules, and traditions.

As a young person like this, Beth moves from the question “Who am I?” towards “Where do I fit in the world?” She may try to develop an individual perspective and become aware that the values she has chosen may be different from the values of others. Yet she may still include, perhaps unconsciously, the values and viewpoints of her group and those “like her.” By the late teen years, Beth may move from this stage of conformist, dependent faith towards a self-dependent faith. This can be a time of re-evaluating and questioning what has been received and of searching for a faith that makes sense.

The late years of High School are a time when symbols may lose their power to evoke meaning in a young person. The Bible is typically seen as representing many religious and moral concepts that exist outside of the book itself. Beth may build these concepts into her system of ordering her world. Concepts of God at this time may range from Savior, Spirit, and Holy Trinity to an awareness of the tension between the man Jesus and the universal God.

As a late teen Beth is aware that her widening community holds shared goals and feelings that take precedence over individual interests. She is able to put herself in the other person’s shoes in order to try to understand the other’s viewpoint. This may bring her a need to be of service to others and to assume a community viewpoint.

This may also lead to a “law-and-order” perception of moral reasoning, where right behavior is interpreted as doing one’s duty, respecting authority, and maintaining the social order for its own sake. The more individualized faith of this latter stage may lead Beth to accept responsibility for her own beliefs, attitudes, and life style.

### **TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

The mental, psychological and social development of High School students has important implications for the way they are taught. The students' intellectual abilities are bursting into bloom, and many of them are becoming aware of the spiritual side to their nature. They are increasingly freeing themselves from home and parents. This may mean that they are in class because they want to be there. On the other hand, they are very busy with school, job, social life, and a host of activities. Thus, you may need to give the young people a personal invitation to join your class.

High School students like Beth are facing many big decisions – career, education, boy/girl relationships and moral choices. They need to be helped to know God's Word and the Holy Spirit as a guide, support, and comfort in their lives.

Beth needs, now less than younger children, to be loved and accepted and valued. The attitudes and atmosphere of your classroom should make it possible for these needs to be met. Students need to feel safe in the class – to know you will respect their contributions and not reveal anything outside of class they say in a discussion.

An important way of accepting the young people is to allow them the freedom to express opinions that are contrary to your own beliefs and perhaps to the teachings of the Church. You may very well be confronted with statements such as "I don't believe that because..."

You will not want to tell Beth that she must believe. Remember each of us had to come to our own faith in our own mind and heart. Try to consider your role as being that of a faith-sharer. The young people need to see that you have a faith and are comfortable about sharing it.

Beth needs to discover for herself the relevance of the Bible and of Christianity to her life. She will rebel against indoctrination and having her decisions made for her. Thus, we recommend that you view your role as that of a facilitator rather than an instructor. High School students need opportunities to have a real role in the life of the Church body and in their own class. One way to provide this is by a rotating system in which one or two students assist you each week in planning and directing a class session. Another way is to have students responsible for a part of the lesson – the music, the prayers, etc. Perhaps your students would want to consider preparing prayers, poems, or liturgies to share with the entire congregation.

The secret of teaching any age level is real love and concern for the student. Know them as people; really listen to what they say; be honest in your answers and about your opinions. Saying "I don't know; let's try to find out" is an answer that wins the students' respect and arouses their interest in searching for answers. Above all, enjoy being with the young people.

### THE ADULT STUDENT

It is not surprising to find great differences among adults—differences in social perspective, in ways of relating to others, in moral reasoning, and in faith development. The stages of the normal cycle from early career and/or marriage through mature career and parenting and/or mentoring onto retirement and old age obviously play a large part in creating such differences among adults. The variety of ages, backgrounds, education, and careers also have an effect.

There are, however, some general patterns that can be identified. Adults tend to be able to see the shades of gray in the world around them. Their world typically expands over the years from an immediate community towards a more universal viewpoint. They can form relationships with many others in various situations, sometimes including not only those “like us” but those “not like us.” They may accept rather uncritically the conventions and attitudes of their group, the law and constituted authority of their community and institutions, or they may develop a view that their personal experiences are the test of what is valid. Most adults have a period in mid-life where parenting or being a mentor or coach or guide for others is very important to them. There seems to be a psychological need to pass on what “I am” and “What I have learned.” In later years, adults grow towards what we call wisdom, and they struggle to integrate their lives into a coherent whole.

In moral reasoning and faith development adults may be found in more than one stage within the same grouping. Adults may make moral decisions out of any of four constructs. Some still decide moral issues on the basis of what others will think; for others, right behavior consists of doing one’s duty, respecting authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. Other adults reach an awareness of the vast differences in values and opinion and feel a need for finding ways to reach a consensus on these matters. For these adults accept as right the standards that have been agreed upon by society and that respect individual rights. They believe laws can and should be changed to meet social needs. This “social contract” orientation assumes that in personal matters, one’s personal values are the guide to be followed. A very few adults may reach a stage of thinking that what is right is determined by that which is in accord with universal ethical principles such as justice, equality of human rights, and respect for individual persons. In summary, adults can be found at any of four stages of moral reasoning, the first of which typically arises during adolescence. Occasionally, adults can even be found making use of the moral reasoning appropriate to an intermediate child, that is, obedience in hope of receiving a reward.

During the last fifteen years, there has been research into the stages through which one’s faith progresses. Six stages have been identified, described, and correlated to the typical age at which they first occur. The sixth stage is very rare. Adults can, however, be found at stages three through five and, in some cases, even at stage two. Stage three is described by a dependent and conformist faith. The person has not critically examined beliefs and values but accepts them on the authority of someone who knows or because they are the acceptable beliefs of the immediate group in which these persons find themselves. In stage four individual accept responsibility for their own beliefs, values, attitudes, and lifestyle. They attempt to resolve tensions between the relative and the absolute, between individualist and belonging to a community, and between self-fulfillment and serving others. These persons have arrived at a self-dependent faith. At stage five, persons can live out their own beliefs yet can honor what is good in the lives of others who have different beliefs and values. These persons are prepared to accept the risks and costs of being part of a community and reaching beyond community. This stage is often called inter-dependent faith.

Another way of looking at different faith styles is to use the terms “experienced Faith” (what we believe), “affiliate faith” (what I have joined), “searching faith” (seeking to define one’s own beliefs), and “owned faith.” Strangely, adults can be found at any of these stages, and often will be found participating in the same adult class.

### The Adult Student Continued –

The styles of faith, while they do represent a sequential development, should not be looked upon in a way that defines one stage as better than another. They are different-not qualitatively better! No attempt should be made to “label” people as stage four, or stage three, etc. Such a classification requires the skilled use of in-depth interviews. The same content answer to a question and the same behavior can occur at several stages.

The moderator of an adult class needs to be aware of the many places persons can be in their faith development. They should be affirmed in their varying points of view. In particular, they should be provided opportunities to doubt and question, to examine different positions, and to hear people talk about their values and their faith. It is in this open environment and searching attitude that people can come to own their faith.

### **LEADING AN ADULT CLASS**

Adult Bible study classes are best designed so that a class may discuss, organize, experience, evaluate, and apply to life the Scriptures for the day. The power of the Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit may be depended upon to bring forth from the group growth in understanding the Bible and its relevance to twentieth century Christians.

The best model for Adult education emphasizes the role of the leader to be that of a facilitator and moderator-not an instructor, not a lecturer. You will be building community in your class, guiding discussions, moving the lesson from one activity to another, organizing key ideas on chalkboard or newsprint, and, most of all, setting the tone of the class.

The tone you should strive to attain is one of acceptance, caring and community. Many adults are hesitant to speak out in discussion or to answer a question until they feel safe in a group. There are a number of things you can do to establish a safe environment within your class. One is to spend time for several weeks on activities that can build community. Such activities are usually structured so that two persons talk and share together, then join two others to share on another topic. Several exercises such as these allow a trust level to build gradually in the class. Such grouping should be used a number of times at the beginning of the year and occasionally thereafter.

Another way to make people feel accepted and risk participating is to divide your class into smaller groups for short discussion. You may wish to appoint facilitators for such. The attitude of the moderator-leader is a key ingredient in establishing an atmosphere of trust. You need to accept people where they are, make no judgments about their opinions, strive to include everyone, and invite rather than call on people to respond. Your own loving, concerned interest in them and energy and excitement for the study will be the key to making your class a safe community for members to learn together and share with each other.

**Appendix III**  
**Bibliography of Reference Materials**  
**related to the Baptismal Covenant Questions**

1. The Holy Bible, any study edition
2. *The Serendipity Bible*, Serendipity House Publications (It has helpful suggestions for group and individual study and discussion.) ISBN: 978-0310937326
3. The Book of Common Prayer ISBN: 978-0898690811
4. *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*, by Marion J Hatchett ISBN: 978-0060635541
5. *The Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education*, Cowley Publications ISBN: 978-0819223371 (Any of the three editions are good.)
6. *Welcome to the Episcopal Church: An Introduction to Its History, Faith, and Worship* by Christopher L. Webber and Frank T. Griswold III ISBN: 978-0819218209
7. *The Episcopal Handbook*, Morehouse Publishing, 2008 ISBN: 978-0819223296
8. *The Catholic Religion: A manual of instruction for members of the Anglican Church* by Vernon Staley ISBN: 978-1149127322
9. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* ISBNs: 978-0879739768, 978-0385508193, 978-1574557206
10. *Catholic Christianity* by Peter Kreeft ISBN: 978-0898707984
11. Motion Picture: *The Passion of the Christ*, 2004, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox (recommended for addressing Question 2 at the High School and Adult levels)
12. *The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis ISBN: 978-1557481429 (recommended for addressing Question 5 at the Junior High, High School, and Adult levels)
13. Motion Picture: *Needful Things*, 1993, Metro Goldwyn Mayer (recommended for addressing Question 5 at the High School and Adult levels)
14. Motion Picture: *Amazing Grace*, 2007, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox (recommended for addressing Question 8 at the High School and Adult levels)
15. *My Faith My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church*, by Jenifer Gamber ISBN: 978-0819222206
16. *Your Faith Your Life: An Invitation to the Episcopal Church*, by Jenifer Gamber ISBN: 978-0819223210
17. *Saints, Signs and Symbols: The Symbolic Language of Christian Art*, by Hilarie & James Cornwell ISBN: 978-0281062126
18. *What's in the Bible for Teens*, by Mark Littleton, Jeannette Gardner Littleton, and Larry Richards, PhD. ISBN: 978-0764203862
19. *Family-Based Youth Ministry*, by Mark DeVries ISBN: 978-0830832439
20. *Children and the Theologians: Clearing the Way for Grace*, by Jerome Berryman ISBN: 978-0819223470
21. *Exploring and Proclaiming The Apostles' Creed*, edited by Roger E. Van Harn, 2004 ISBN: 978-0802821201

The Diocese of Dallas Catechesis Commission invites interested users of these guidelines to recommend other Christian education resources and reference materials for addition to this list.

Please email recommendations to Deacon Pam Dunbar at: [pdunbar@episcopal-dallas.org](mailto:pdunbar@episcopal-dallas.org)



## Appendix IV - Types of Prayer – “A.C.T.S.”

### A. ADORATION & PRAISE: 2 Cor 9:15

1. "Putting into words the gratitude that ought to swell up in our hearts whenever we review all that God has done for us."
2. Passages: Ps 89:7-9; 99:1-5; 111:9; Angels: Lk 2:14; Rev 4:8,11

### B. CONFESSION: 1 Jn 1:9

1. You cannot enter the presence of God in prayer without confessing: Isa 6:1-5
2. Great men who confessed their sin:
  - a) Daniel
    - (1) Daniel 9:5 acknowledged sin in 7 different ways
    - (2) V 18-19 "not our merits but your compassion"
    - (3) v20-22 while in "extreme weariness", while praying Gabriel was sent
  - b) Nehemiah: 1:5-11
3. God won't answer our prayers when there is sin in our lives:
  - a) Ps 139:23-24; 66:18; Pr 28:9,13; Isa 59:1
4. God won't forgive us unless we forgive others too: Mt 6:14-15
5. Consequences of not confessing our sins to God:
  - a) We make God a liar: 1 Jn 1:9-10
  - b) We are in the "bond of iniquity" Acts 8:22-23
  - c) It has a big effect upon our physical health too: Ps 32:3-7

### C. THANKSGIVING: Phil 4:6

1. Adoration/praise & thanksgiving defined:
  - a) Adoration is for what God is
  - b) Thanksgiving is for what God has done
2. Passages:
  - a) Isa 25:1; 1 Th 5:17-18; Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; Eph 5:20
  - b) Song, "count your many blessings name them one by one"
3. Ingratitude is sin:
  - a) Lk 17:11-19 "where are the nine lepers who were cleansed"
  - b) Rom 1:21 "neither did they give thanks"

### D. SUPPLICATION

1. Petitions for a personal request: Phil 4:6
  - a) wisdom: Jas 1:5-8
  - b) Health: 2 Cor 12:7-9
  - c) Daily needs: Mt 6:33
  - d) Resting temptation: Mt 26:41
2. Intercessions for others:

- a) Intercession: lit, "to soften the face by stroking" as a child does to parent to change mind
- b) Christ intercedes for us: Isa 53:12; Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 9:24; 1 Ti 2:5-6
- c) The Holy Spirit intercedes for us as we pray: Rom 8:26-27; Jude 20; Eph 6:18
- d) We should intercede for other men:
  - (1) Jas 5:16; Acts 8:24; 2 Ti 2:1; Ex 32:11; Gen 18:23-33
  - e) "Talking to men for God is great, but talking to God for man is greater."  
(Bounds)