

Apostolic Briefings & Communications



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary | Villa Maria House of Studies | Immaculata, PA 19345



❄️ It "SNOW" secret
how much God loves you!



In This Issue Winter, 2017



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- Encourage students to move quickly at lunchtime and dismissal in order to be able to teach up to the last minute. Each day announce what books the students will need for homework. Call the children by rows or tables to get their items so there is not a bottleneck situation at the closet.
- Have days that you work really hard to push the students so when the practices for the Christmas Pageants come or you have some nice activities, students may enjoy them more knowing the work has been completed

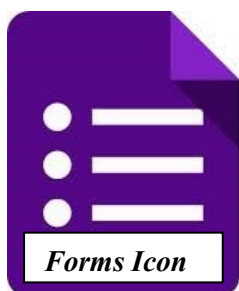
When you find yourself longing for the extra time to teach, review this list and see what you can do with the time that you have. You may be surprised that tweaking your daily schedule and ensuring the best use of time, may lead to an additional thirty to forty five minutes in your day.

Time Saved with Self-Correcting Google Forms

Google – G Suite for education - has many time saving apps for teachers. Front load your time by learning the apps, and you will greatly benefit from it. During this season, challenge yourself to learn all there is about Google Forms.

Google Forms for formative assessment

Google continues to improve their services offered to their customers and with Google being free, who would not be their customer? Save yourself time and save our country a tree by using Google Forms. Simply log into your Google – Gmail account. In the waffle located in the upper right hand corner, click on the *Forms* icon that is pictured here. Click on blank



quiz and name your quiz. The first question should always be name. After this add a section that will now be your quiz. Although you may have short and paragraph questions, multiple choice and true and false questions work best for self grading quizzes. Write your questions and then click on answer key. Click on the correct answer along with the number of points you will give the question. Under settings, the teacher may opt to immediately tell the student if they answered correctly, receive their score at the end of the quiz, or wait until the teacher releases the grade. Once you have your quiz generated, you may share with your class by a link or on google classroom. Please note that in the past, a teacher needed an add-on of *flubaroo* to

mark the quiz. Currently, the quiz may be graded directly in the forms app.

Google Forms for Collecting Information

Google Forms may be used to collect information about the students. While the office will have the data information that you may need, consider customizing the information for yourself. Make a form for name, address, telephone number, email address. Ask students what they like and what they would like to see improved in school. The form will collect the information in a Google Sheet – similar to an Excel file that the teacher may filter to get the needed information.

Google Forms are Great for a Quick Poll

Do you every give your students choices about field trips, lunch time videos, or what day would they like to choose for a dress down day? Create a quick poll and you will have your answers immediately. You may also create a Google form for Student Council Elections. The students themselves could create the form and launch the election.

Time to Get Ready for Advent



Advent, which means coming, begins four Sundays before Christmas and the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Andrew on November 30th. This year, Christmas will be on a Monday making the Advent Season the shortest possible – three weeks and one day. You will not have the opportunity to light the fourth Advent Candle in school. Because the season is so short, make sure you are ready for the beginning.

Take the time to search YouTube for Advent videos. This four minute video from YouTube is among the best and well worth the time showing to grades five and above along with sharing with your parents:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSsMq6UXXwo>. Just a reminder - always preview YouTube clips and videos prior to showing them to your class.

There are many websites worth visiting to get ideas. Visit *The Religion Teacher* site at: <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/advent-activities/> While the site is not as physically attractive as others, it contains links to many sites. While there, sign up on the right hand side of the page for the Religion Teachers Guide to Planning. You will receive a sixty plus page PDF chunk full of ideas. Loyola Press also has some very nice information for your professional and personal spiritual life for Advent: <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/activities>



For personal use, consider using this website: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent>. There are many nice video clips for each Sunday of Advent. This site offers great spiritual advice throughout the year.

Don't forget when making those Christmas Crafts to send home to Mom and Dad to make them spiritual as well. Everyone loves to receive a hand crafted Nativity complete with the child's name and year created on the bottom. Pinterest, <https://www.pinterest.com/> offers many teacher-created and tried ideas that will work in your classroom.

In the older grades, teach the children the Special Christmas Prayer or Novena of St. Andrew listed below. St. Andrew was the first apostle and as we begin the new liturgical year, this prayer is associated with him. From the Feast of **Saint Andrew the Apostle** (11/30) to Christmas (12/25) one may begin a special prayer, simply called the "Christmas Prayer" to obtain favors if one's requests are in accordance with God's will. It is believed that whoever recites the following prayer with a pious heart **15 times a day** from 11/30 to 12/25, will obtain whatever is asked. On a side note, this prayer has been very successful when prayed for someone to have a baby.

Saint Andrew Christmas Novena

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, (mention your intention here) through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen
(Say 15 times every day from 11/30 to 12/25 for a special favor)



One Final Thought - A Thanksgiving Idea

Thanksgiving is a time to appreciate the many gifts that God has given us. People are the greatest gifts we have received. Consider giving each child and yourself a class list with everyone's name on it, including your own. For homework, the students and you are given a week to write something positive and nice that they like about each person in the class.



Go to the computer lab and have each of the children write their name on a Word Document or Google Doc and then tell them to stand and move to the computer on the right. Moving to the next computer, the student looks at the name on the top, and types in what they wrote about that child. When complete, they move to the computer on the right until they have written something about each one in the class – including you. The last child to write on the screen is asked to type the date on the bottom and save the document.

You may choose to have the documents sent to your Google Classroom, email, or just saved on the desktop. Either you or an older class of children should come in and open the documents. Make them look fancy using a nice font and size. Print off the papers on good paper even considering using specialty computer paper. Save the papers to give to the children at a time you feel is most appropriate – Christmas – or sometime during winter when everyone needs a pick me up. Be sure to read all the papers before you distribute them and make adjustments where needed. You may be surprised that this is the assignment the children will forever remember about your class.



This thought is taken from the Internet where a teacher did this and the students retained the paper throughout their life with many carrying the paper with them at all times. It is listed several times on the Internet and the following link is worth opening in regards to this story:

An Unforgettable Classroom Experience: <http://www.kindspring.org/story/view.php?sid=7854>

On a totally different note, there are many nice, inspiring stories posted on the Internet and many will come through to your Facebook account. To check the accuracy of a story, go to <https://www.snopes.com/>. The above story did occur. In most instances, part of the story happened. You would actually be able to use some of these stories to teach oral history and show how “whisper down the lane” is a lived reality.



Sources are listed within the text.

For additional information regarding the IHM Best Practices contact Sister Margaret Rose Adams, IHM at smgtadams@gmail.com.

11-17

Reaching I-Don't-Care and Underachieving Students



By now I hope you've had some success building relationships with your most challenging students. Only a minute or so a few times a week works wonders. An unexpected "thanks for taking care of that", a word of encouragement about improved effort, a non-academic comment, or short conversation at an off time eventually breaks down fear. Fear is the underlying cause of most negative attitudes. It could be fear of failure, of being mocked/bullied. It could even be fear of success! Remember that these challenging students would rather look bad than smart; or bad rather than stupid. They come to school in a suit of armor. That armor serves many purposes:



If I care and fail, it hurts more.

I don't feel valued, so why should I care?

I cared before, and was disappointed. They won't trick me again!

If I use this armor often enough, they'll give up eventually and leave me alone.

Techniques that we have been using with I-Don't-Care children may not have worked. We say there's no time to try something new. However, if other strategies haven't worked, we can't afford **not** to take time to try some new intervention, even though the results won't be immediate.

Unowned behavior is never changed. MaryAnn Brittingham (Bureau of Education and Research) offers this advice called "Putting the Game on the Table". I-Don't-Care and underachieving students must eventually own up to their behavior and be responsible. She suggests putting an index card (or large sticky note) on the child's desk. Mark two columns for the idea you're working on (e.g. completing homework). Label one column *Remembered to...* and the other *Forgot to...* Each day put a tally mark in the proper column as the child looks on. No praise, reward, judgment, just the mark. Next week give the card or sticky to the child and let her place tally marks. You can keep your own tally and compare at the end of the week. That might bring an unconscious behavior to a conscious level and create a

win-win situation. (Incidentally, you can sign up for Mary Ann's newsletter on discipline at: MaryAnn@mbrittingham.com)

In the last issue we talked about using fill-ins on study guides or on power points. Most study guides do all the work for the class. Most power point slides contain all the information. Some teachers say, "Copy these notes, then we'll talk about them". That is mind-numbing for students, especially those who struggle or don't care in the first place. Not only that, it's backwards! Instead begin with a hook-and-hold: a story relating to the topic, an enticing question to get discussion started, set the scene, show a video clip, sing or play a song. Then when the material begins to make sense, have the students take some notes or read from the text. If you sprinkle fill-ins through the guide or power point, the subliminal message is that the child must do some of the work.

As the attitude improves with time, we exhale and silently say, "Finally!" Then the bottom falls out and the improvement may relapse. Don't change your plan, just add a support for a *limited* time until the child gets back on track. For example, "I've noticed that you're having trouble doing your homework again. How can I help you get started?" Asking a child, "Why do you do this?" often gives you the shoulder shrug or "I don't know", so be specific. Say something like, "Here's what I'm noticing. You rush to get your work done. Do you see it too? I'm wondering if it's because you're afraid you'll have to miss recess in order to finish it. What are your thoughts?"

Be specific with your words of encouragement as well. These students can sniff out phoniness in a heartbeat. They think we're trying to bribe them so that they will do the work. This cements their negativity, and they go on strike! Mentally they could be saying, "You think that'll work with me? I'll show you!" So rather than *nice job* try *much better number formation* or *you stayed focused longer today*. If saying these things makes you feel phony or uncomfortable, make up a set of cards with assorted comments on them. Place them on desks as the occasion arises.

Daniel Pink notes in *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* that rewards, consequences and contracts work against us with these students. He is convinced that "we are raising externally motivated kids". In their minds they say, "I'll do it only if you give me something for it." These incentives are band aids which do not heal the wound. What's the wound? Fear!

Fear is _____ than any _____ or _____.
(greater) (reward) (consequence)

Some I-Don't-Care or underachieving children ask many questions. They want to convince us that they can't do the work, don't understand, or just want to waste our teaching time even before directions are given or the lesson is taught. Try sticky notes for that type of child also. Put 5 on his desk. Every time he asks a question he removes one note. The remaining notes equate to something positive: time on computer, extra snack time etc. He could also write key words about questions he has. As you teach, he crosses off the question you've just answered. At the end of the lesson he may ask the ***one*** most important question remaining on the card or sticky. (This also requires decision making.) For discipline you can also put a sticky on a desk when you note misbehavior. Don't comment, just move on. If you notice that the misbehavior continues, place another sticky. Three strikes...you're out! That means you impose a consequence. However, if the behavior improves, remove a note (or maybe two). This lets the child know that you see the positive as well as the negative.

Remember: **Don't blame the lettuce!**

You change behavior with _____, not _____.
(compassion) (judgment)

PRIME TIMES



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Immaculata, Pennsylvania 19345

November, 2017

Five Pilgrims, Five Indians

Five Indians help them plant corn.

(pretend to plant)

The Indians bring the corn

(hold up right hand)

The Pilgrims bring the meat.

(hold up left hand)

Ten new friends sit down to eat.

(Fold hands together)



Monthly Primary Stem Centers

- November: Watch a mini video on www.schooltube.com about the first winter for the pilgrims. Have the students create housing for the pilgrims using only popsicle sticks, play dough, and scraps of fabric.
- December: Have the students read a book (fiction or non-fiction) about a Christmas tree. Challenge them to create a free standing decorated Christmas tree of their own using only glue and construction paper.
- January: Have the students watch a mini video on www.schooltube.com about snowflakes. Provide a tray with supplies such as pipe cleaners, construction paper, beads, glue, etc... to build a model snowflake.

A Story for Advent

The Legend of the Poinsettia is a beautiful story by Tomie dePaola. This Mexican legend tells how the poinsettia came to be, through a little girl's unselfish gift to the Christ Child. His glorious paintings capture not only the brilliant colors of Mexico and its art, but also the excitement of the children preparing for Christmas. If you Google The Legend of the Poinsettia activities, you will find an assortment of activities you can use after reading the story.

Saintly Advent Calendar

This year in preparing for Christmas



count down the days with the Saints. Each day display a picture and give a short biography of either the Saint of the Day or one

of your favorites. As a wrap up the class can talk about how the virtue the Saint exemplifies helps them to draw closer to Jesus this Advent Season.

Peppermint Stick

I took a lick

Of a peppermint stick

And oh it tasted yummy!

It used to be on the Christmas tree

But now it's in my tummy!



The Importance of Being Present

Being truly present to one another is something we strive for and something we want to impart to our students. The book "What Does It Mean to Be Present?" by Rana DiOrio and illustrated by Eliza Wheeler is a great way to concretely share about the importance of each moment.

Helping Verbs

Tune: Jingle Bells
Helping verbs! Helping verbs!
There are 23...
Am, is, are! Was, and were!
Being, been and be!
Have, has, had!
Do, does, did!
Shall, should, will, and would!
There are 5 more helping verbs:
May, might, must, can, could!

Five Yummy Gingerbread

Five Little Gingerbread sitting on a plate,
The first one said, "Boy we smell so great!"
The second one said, "There's a chill in the air."
The third one said, "I see hungry children everywhere!"
The fourth one said, "I think we better run!"
The fifth one said, "Here the children come!"
Then the children each grabbed one
And with a MUNCH, CRUNCH, MUNCH
The five yummy gingerbread all turned into lunch!



Ready, Set, Play

Don't spend valuable time handing out game supplies. For partner games, prepare one cup of game supplies for every two students. Each cup contains items such as dice, a paper clip, a penny, game markers etc. Store cups where students can reach them when it is game time. One partner gets a cup. When the game time is over, the other partner returns the cup and all its contents to the storage spot. The Dollar Store has small plastic containers with lids that are also good for storing game supplies. If your students are in teams or groups, you can label the cups or containers with the number of their team or group.

Duct Tape Saves the Day

Coffee cans and small and large Pringles containers are also great for storing game supplies, rulers, math manipulatives etc. Colorful duct tape can be used to cover the cans and labels can be placed on each container.

Warm Fuzzy

Materials: Colorful fuzzies, clear plastic containers with lids or clear circular containers with a dome lid.
With containers that have lids, you need to cut a hole large enough for a fuzzy to fit through. One container is needed for each student. Explain to the students that each time they show kindness, helpful manners, selfless acts, or other virtues you feel need to be practiced, they can earn a warm fuzzy. A student or teacher can put a fuzzy in the container, if they see someone following classroom rules and showing kindness. At the end of the week the student with the most warm fuzzies earns a special treat. If there is a tie, both winners receive a special treat. You may want to decorate a small bulletin board and post students' name and picture or create a Warm Fuzzy certificate. Another activity would be to group students so that they can create a pictograph or bar graph using the colors of their warm fuzzies. Students can also use the fuzzies to create patterns and challenge their classmates to solve the pattern of what comes next. Fuzzies can be purchased at the Dollar Store.



Mittens

I wiggle my left hand,
I wiggle my right,
Inside of my mittens
So warm and so tight!



I wiggle my pinkie,
I wiggle my thumb,
So when I make snowballs,
My hands won't get numb.

Privacy Boards

Create a Privacy Board for test taking time or when students just need their own space.

Materials:

- 2 file folders – oak tag or colored
- Glue folders together at the ends
- Ideas to glue on the front sides and inside sides
- When your ideas are glued in place, laminate the folders.

Some ideas for the outside of the folders:

Left outside: I need quiet when I am thinking.

Middle outside: Great work is happening here.

Right outside: My brain is working hard.

Left inside:

1. Take a deep breath and relax.
2. Raise your hand if you need help or have a question.

Middle inside: A prayer that can be prayed before the test begins. Sample:

Dear Jesus,

Be with me while I take this test. Help me believe in myself. I know that you love me. Help me to make good choices and decisions in and out of the classroom. Thank you for always being there for me. Amen.

Right inside:

- Before you turn in your paper:
- Check for questions or problems you may have skipped.
- Give the hard questions or problems one more try.
- Make sure your full name, date, and student # are at the top of the paper.

Laminate and you have your privacy board. You can add other items to the inside. e.g. Number line, alphabet, rules, etc. You can create your own prayer or write a prayer with your students.

Submitted by: E. Houlette

Mitten Math Moment

Use this quick skill stretcher all winter long! Put long, narrow cards with math problems in two large mittens. When you have a few minutes between activities, designate a “mitten Math Moment.” Then have a student take a card from a mitten and read it aloud or you may read it aloud. Ask students to solve the problem mentally or use scrap paper or white board. After you discuss students’ solutions and reasoning, confirm the correct answer.

Sample Problems:

- 12 students play outdoors. If each child wears 2 mittens, how many mittens are there in all?
- There are 10 more blue mittens than red mittens. There are 22 red mittens. How many blue mittens are there?
- I buy mittens for 75 cents. I pay with 8 dimes. How much change will I receive?



The Mitten Song

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle,

Thumbs in the thumb place,
Fingers all together!
This is the song
We sing in mitten weather.
When it is cold
It doesn't matter whether
Mittens are wool,
Or made of finest leather.
Thumbs in the thumb place,
Fingers all together!
This is the song
We sing in mitten weather.

Question Song

Tune: He's Got the
Whole World in His
Hands



I've got the who, what, where, when, why, and
how
I've got the who, what, where, when, why, and
how
I've got the who, what, where, when, why, and
how
I've got the QUESTION words in my hand.

Clean-Up Song

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
Time to clean up where you are.
Put the toys back in their place.
Keep a smile on your face.
Twinkle, twinkle little star.
Time to clean up where you are.



Words in the third line can be changed to what
you are using at the time of clean-up.

January

January now is here
A fine new start
For a whole new year.

The snow comes down
In the dark of night.
When we awake
The world is white.

In January,
When there's snow,
We get our sleds
And away we go.



One Odd Day

By: Doris Fisher

When teaching odd and even numbers a
Humorous, rhythmic, read-aloud story is "One
Odd Day." It's about a boy who wakes up one
morning to find that everything is literally odd.
The colorful, busy spreads have child appeal,
and independent readers can pore over the
pages, trying to spot all the odd things hidden in
the art.

Odd and Even

By: Marg Wadsworth

If you are an even number
You always have a pair
So if you look around
Your buddy will always be there.
But....
If you are an odd number
There's always a lonely one
He looks around to find his buddy
But he's the only one.

Even Number Cheer

2, 4, 6, 8, who do we appreciate?
Evens!!! (whisper) 0
1, 3, 5, 7, 9, we think odds are mighty fine!

Even Was Her Name-O

Tune: Old MacDonald

There was a farmer had a cow and *Even* was her
name-o
0, 2, 4, 6, 8! 0, 2, 4, 6, 8! 0, 2, 4, 6, 8!
And *Even* was her name-o!

Odd Was His Name-O

Tune: Old MacDonald

There was a farmer had a pig and *Odd* was his
name-o
1, 3, 5, 7, 9! 1, 3, 5, 7, 9! 1, 3, 5, 7, 9!
And *Odd* was his name-o!

MAXIMIZING LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

INCLUSION PRACTICES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



COLLABORATION and Co-Teaching

As a special education teacher in the 1990's, I pulled students out of their general education classes for extra help with reading and math. But as the students returned to

their classrooms, they had to reacclimate to what was going on in a class that was inevitably doing something else in their absence. It was these

students who at that moment were like visitors in their own classrooms. Separation for instruction was not optimal for the students, their teachers or their classmates. We needed a different approach. The students needed to stay put and get the help they needed in the place they belonged. Our school's solution: **collaboration**, between teachers, assistants and others, with an emphasis on a form of collaboration called **co-teaching**. Successful collaboration would need commitment and a willingness to share roles. Staff and faculty had much to learn.

COMMUNICATION MAKES COLLABORATION AND CO-TEACHING WORK.

True collaboration has the following characteristics (Friend & Cook, 2017):

Collaboration is ideally a **voluntary** commitment between partners. It

requires that **each person's contribution is equally valued and that each has equal power in decision making.**

Collaboration is based on partners

having one or more **mutual goals** to help them maintain their shared commitment. In collaborative relationships, partners **share responsibility for participating and decision making**, as well as **sharing their resources** like time, knowledge and materials. Finally, collaborators **share accountability** for the outcome of their shared work, especially as it relates to their students.

Demonstrating true collaboration in the classroom generalizes into settings in and out of school. Working well with others is a skill both educators and students need in "real life." A collaborative

Resources for Collaboration and Co-Teaching

www.cultofpedagogy.com/co-teaching-pushin/: Co-teaching resources, and a great site in general for teaching blogs, podcasts, videos and more

www.Pinterest.com: Join and search by topic for resources on planning, models, templates and making co-teaching work.

www.teachervision.com: Articles and resources for collaboration and co-teaching.

www.understood.org/en/learnin-g-attention-issues/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/collaborative-team-teaching-what-you-need-to-know: Collaborative Team Teaching: What You Need to Know in simple language.

www.teachhub.com/effective-co-teaching-strategies: Examines strategies for effective co-teaching.

Can we as Catholic School teachers and catechists in PREP be creative and enterprising in the use of these strategies to foster inclusion?

Sr. Kathleen Schipani, IHM

approach demands flexibility and commitment. True collaborations may still meet with challenges, including their school's culture and whether it values a collaborative approach, power imbalances between collaborators, cultural differences between collaborators, and pragmatic issues such as actually finding time to collaborate. It is important to keep the focus on student learning, to set realistic goals, to value collaboration as an effective interpersonal style, and to learn to trust collaborative partners. Most importantly, communicate! As these characteristics emerge, collaboration improves. It takes time.

Co-teaching is one service delivery option for collaboration. When **two or more professionals** co-teach, their **class is diverse** but their **classroom space is shared**. Co-teaching aims to ensure high quality service delivery for all students, including students with disabilities, students who are academically gifted, and students who are English Language Learners. Co-teaching enables students to spend less or no time as "visitors" to their classroom because of missed instructional time from being pulled out. Time out of the classroom is less necessary, because **instruction is delivered jointly** in any of several styles:

One teaches, one observes, so that needed student data can be gathered by the observing professional.

Station teaching, which allows students to work at stations with educators strategically planning and delivering instruction along the way.

Parallel teaching, which lowers the student-teacher ratio as professionals provide the same instruction to divided but diverse groups.

Alternative teaching, which provides intense small group remedial or enrichment instruction without the groups leaving the classroom.

Teaming, where both educators plan and provide instruction together to the whole group through discussion, demonstration or other pairing strategies.

One teach one assist, which can be helpful when planning time is scarce, but may underutilize the expertise of one professional. Ideally, this model should be used infrequently.

Co-teaching has the capacity to bring intense and individualized instruction into the general education classroom, leading to less stigma, less fragmentation of instruction and a greater sense of belonging for students needing supports or enrichment. Successful

co-teachers work hard to **be clear about roles and responsibilities** in their instructional delivery. They **value each other's philosophy and beliefs** about education, figure out how to **demonstrate parity**, and **agree upon routines and behavior management** of their shared classroom. Successful co-teachers work through important details, like how to **give each other feedback**, how much **classroom noise** they will tolerate and even **knowing each other's pet peeves**. They acknowledge that scheduling, planning time and the distribution of students with special needs across classes may be ongoing challenges, but work together and with the school's administration to create opportunities to plan and deliver instruction using the co-teaching model to which they have committed. Finally, co-teachers **celebrate the large and small successes** of this chosen model of collaboration, because ultimately, they are working to meet the needs of their diverse classes. Coteaching can even be fun, both for the students and for co-teachers! It was for me.

Communication makes collaboration and coteaching work. Enjoy the journey.

Geralyn Anderson Arango, Ed.D
Holy Family University,
Philadelphia , PA

Each edition of **Maximizing Learning for All Students** will explore inclusion practices and evidenced based strategies that minimizes barriers and maximizes learning for ALL students.

IHM Good Writers Club



Grades 3 & 4

JANUARY

Being thoughtful of others
Is something I do
I look when they speak
And listen well too

FEBRUARY

Every time you smile at someone
It is an act of love;
A gift to that person,
A beautiful thing.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

Grade 5 & 6

JANUARY

Kind words do not cost much
Yet they accomplish much.

Blaise Pascal

FEBRUARY

It is not how much we do;
It is how much love we put into
that action.

Grades 7 & 8

JANUARY

Character takes courage.
It requires doing what is right
Not what's easy or popular.

FEBRUARY

God's works are links
That form a chain of love.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

MARCH



Grades 3 & 4

Life doesn't require that we
do the best –
only that we try our best

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Grades 5 & 6

You have not lived a perfect day,
unless you have done something
for someone who will never
be able to repay you.

Ruth Smeltzer

Grades 7 & 8

Wisdom is knowing what to do next.
Virtue is doing it.

David Starr Jordan

Winter, 2018

PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship
required by the IHM GOOD WRITERS CLUB
for Grade _____

and thereby is entitled to this

Certificate of Merit

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION...Cover Sheet
I.H.M. ABC NOTES -- WINTER, 2017



USCCB CATECHETICAL THEME, 2017 – 2018
“LIVING AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES”

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are very grateful to those who contributed creative Religious Education ideas to this *Winter 2017 Issue*. Their creativity has certainly enhanced this publication!



Advent Staff Prayer Service *Come, Lord Jesus!*

Opening Hymn: Come, Lord Jesus (vs. 1, 2)

This holy season of Advent reminds us that “for us life is Christ.” Advent helps us to recognize anew that the deepest longing of our souls is for our loving God – the One who has come, the One who will come again, the One who comes each day to those who seek Him.

Our longing for God pales in comparison to God’s infinite and unending longing for us. That longing has existed from all eternity and reached new heights in the person of Jesus Christ. We need to get in touch with the Advent longing inside of our hearts and allow God to do His work within us, so that He may continue to reach young hearts through us. As we wait for His coming, let us remember that He has been quietly waiting for us all along.

Psalm 63 Antiphon: Come, Lord Jesus, for You are our life.

Right Side: O God, You are my God, for You I long;
 for You my soul is thirsting.
 My body pines for You
 like a dry, weary land without water.
 So I gaze on You in the sanctuary
 to see Your strength and Your glory.

Both Sides: For Your love is better than life,
 my lips will speak Your praise.
 So I will bless You all my life,
 in Your name I will lift up my hands.
 My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
 my mouth shall praise You with joy.

Left Side: On my bed I remember You.
 On You I muse through the night.
 For You have been my help;
 In the shadow of Your wings I rejoice.
 My soul clings to You;
 Your right hand holds me fast.

Both Sides: Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
 and to the Holy Spirit,
 As it was in the beginning, is now,
 and will be forever. Amen.

Reading: Is.26: 7-9

The way of the smooth is just; the path of the just You make level.
 Yes, for Your way and Your judgments, O Lord, we look to You;
 Your name and Your title are the desire of our souls.
 My soul yearns for You in the night; yes, my spirit within me keeps vigil for You.
 When Your judgment dawns upon the earth, the world's inhabitants learn justice.

Word of the Lord...

Silent Reflection...**Sung Response: "Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."**

God our Father, strengthen us as we strive to sow and nurture the seeds of faith
 that you so graciously provide for us. (Response)

In our efforts, draw us closer to you,
 that we may continue to lead others closer to you. (Response)

Strengthen us so that we may give faithful witness to you always. (Response)

Enkindle in us the fire of your love,
 so that we may share your light and warmth with those we teach. (Response)

May we live lives of Christian witness, being for others beacons in the darkness,
 shining as mirrors who reflect your light and love to all we meet. (Response)

Let us more perfectly reflect in all that we say and do that "for us, life is Christ!" (Response)
(Spontaneous Intercessions)

Our Father...**Closing Prayer:**

Lord, we give You thanks for this holy and beautiful season of Advent.
 As we go about preparing in these days before Christmas,
 help us to keep in mind this longing for You in our hearts.
 As we busy ourselves in making our homes ready,
 help us to make our hearts a worthy home for You.
 How wonderful to know that You long for us, Lord!
 Come, Lord Jesus, for you are our life! Amen.

**Closing Hymn: Come, Lord Jesus (vs. 3, 4)**

The Presentation of the Lord

February 2nd



Call To Worship

Today we celebrate Christ, the Light of the World. Forty days ago we celebrated Christmas, the birth of Jesus. Jesus was brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph to be consecrated to God, fulfilling the laws of Moses. It was at this time that Simeon recognized Jesus as the Savior, who would be the Light to all nations.

Today is a good day to remind ourselves that we, like Simeon, Mary, and Joseph are to proclaim and bring Christ, the Light of the World, to all we meet each day.

Suggested Songs:

· We Are the Light of the World · The Light of Christ · Christ, Be Our Light

Sign of the Cross

Opening Prayer

God, Our Creator, your Son Jesus told us that we must be the Light of the world. Help us to show Your Light to the world by following the example of Mary, Your Mother, who did Your will. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. AMEN.

Reading: Malachi 3: 1-4

Response: Psalm 27: Verses 1, 4, 13 (R/ *The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation*)

Gospel: Luke 2: 22-32

Intercessions:

God, our Father, we thank You for sending Jesus to be our Light and our Guide. Help us to follow Him faithfully. We ask you now to hear our prayers of intercession.

Response: *Light of the World, Hear Our Prayer.*

1. That we may share our light generously with our families, teachers, classmates, friends, neighbors, and all whom we meet each day, we pray...
2. That we may be generous with those in our world who are poor, homeless, and have no one to care for them, by sharing the good things in our lives with them, we pray...
3. That we may be loving toward all people, showing that love by our good example of sharing our time, talents, and presence, we pray...
4. That we may be a light of goodness that shines so brightly before all, that others may believe in You, we pray...

God, Creator of Light, You ask us to be the Light of the world. Help us to be like Simeon, in proclaiming Jesus to the world by our words and actions. We ask this through Jesus, The Light of the World. AMEN.

Closing Prayer: *Simeon's Canticle* (Luke 2: 29-32)

Lord, now you let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of every people; a Light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people, Israel! Amen.



Catholic Schools Week 2018

LEARN – SERVE- LEAD – SUCCEED

Prayer Service of Appreciation for our Teachers

“Teacher - What a beautiful name this is! Thank you for your dedication and your example. Thank you especially for teaching our children and our young people to pray.”

Pope Francis

Call to Prayer:

Catholic Schools Week 2018 concludes with the beautiful solemnity of the Presentation of Our Lord. Just as Simeon and Anna recognized Jesus as the long-awaited Savior and “Light”, today we wish to recognize and give thanks to each of our teachers for bringing the Light of Christ to all of us. Like the “sanctuary lamp” their goodness points us to God’s presence and nearness in our lives. As the candle melts to tiny embers, their constant selfless giving is a special blessing and a call to let our own “light shine” before all.

Hymn:

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Verse 1

Antiphon:

”Let your light shine before all that they may see your good deeds and give glory to God.” Matthew 5:16

Please Pray in Unison:

Canticle of Mother Teresa

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance everywhere I go.
That my life may only be a radiance of Yours.



Shine through me, and be so in me
That every soul I come in contact with
May feel Your presence in my soul.
Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus!

Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as You shine,
So to shine as to be a light to others;
The light, O Jesus will be all from You; none of it will be mine;
It will be You, shining on others through me.

Glory be to the Father. . .

(over)

Reading:Philippians 1:3-7

(2)

"I thank my God whenever I think of You."

Our Sung Response to the Reading will also be the Response to the Intercessions: *The Light of Christ has come into the World.* (2 times)

Intercessions:

We thank God for our teachers who illuminate our minds by guiding us to **LEARN**, as we pray. . .

We thank God for our teachers who ignite our hearts by inviting us to **SERVE**, as we pray. . .

We thank God for our teachers who fire our spirits by challenging us to **LEAD**, as we pray. . .

We thank God for our teachers, who radiate the love of Christ through their help and support, calling us to **SUCCEED** in this world and in the next, as we pray. . .

**Our Father:****Closing Prayer:**

Loving God, You inspired Simeon and Anna to be the first to bless and announce the mission of Your Son, Jesus. Thank you for each teacher in our school who also announces and witnesses to the Mission of Jesus everyday. May the light of Christ continue to enkindle in them the fire of Your love. This we ask in Jesus' Name. Amen

Blessing:

May the "Sanctuary Lamp" of your life remind us of the Divine Presence always brightening our souls with grace. Amen

Closing Hymn:I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Verse 2

*Happy**Catholic**Schools**Week!*

Peace On Earth
Christmas Program



This program affords all classes the opportunity to participate with representatives of each class remaining on the altar, to form the Nativity scene. This program also affords flexibility in how to adapt the directives. The singing is intended for congregational participation.

Good evening! Welcome to our celebration of the mysteries of this sacred season. This evening's program is our Christmas gift to you. This year in a special way we focus on the Angels' message of Peace at the birth of Jesus. We invite you to reflect on this, and join us in singing the hymns during the program.

Voice 1: **Mary!** The first to believe in Jesus! The first to make a place for Him in the world! Who better than Mary to guide us in our waiting, as we long for the peace which was the message of the first Christmas ...

Voice 2: ... as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth ... as we prepare for the feast of Mary, the Mother of God.

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

(Beginning with the youngest grades, students participating in the Nativity Scene will process up the middle aisle to reserved pews. Mary will follow and take her place on the altar.)

Voice 1: **Mary!** The first to hear the good News of the coming of Our Savior, ending the waiting of the Old Testament people, and fulfilling the longing and anticipation of generations of Israelites. Mary! The new Eve!

Voice 2: **Mary!** Our Mother-- our model, our advocate! We pray to Mary, who has always been our mediator during the centuries since the birth of Jesus. Tonight we celebrate Mary, as we reflect on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. We ask her to continue interceding for us during these unsettled times, that our hearts will be united with *hers* in seeking peace and openness to the love that Her Son has to offer.

“Come Lord Jesus”

(5th graders will place Jesse Tree Symbols on tree)

The First Joyful Mystery – The Annunciation

(Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David and the Angel Gabriel slowly approach the altar. Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David take their places on the far sides of the altar. The Angel Gabriel stands by the lectern.)

Voice 1: For thousands of years before the Angel's pronouncement to Mary, the people waited.

Voice 2: Noah waited - Abraham waited - Joseph waited - Moses and David waited ... the whole world waited.

Voice 1: It was not always a peaceful world. The people did not always listen to God. Sometimes God sent them reminders of their need to turn back to Him.

Voice 2: God always protected those who were faithful to Him. He rewarded Abraham's faith. He sheltered Noah and his family from the great flood. He saved Joseph from the plots of his brothers. He protected Moses and the Israelites from Pharaoh's army. He protected David from Goliath. He protected them all because they were obedient and faithful to Him.

(Pre-K and K participants approach Nativity Scene with stuffed animals, followed by Noah. They take their places on the altar, as the animals at the stable.)

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

Voice 1: Mary was faithful to God. God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth to make the greatest pronouncement that was ever made – the long awaited Savior was coming! Mary was to be the mother of Him for whom the whole world had waited.

Voice 2: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke ...

"The angel Gabriel was sent from God to the town of Nazareth, to a Virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, who was of the house and lineage of David. The woman's name was **MARY**. The angel greeted her, saying:"

"Hail Mary"

(Elizabeth approaches – waits at bottom step)



The Second Joyful Mystery – The Visitation

Voice 1: St. Luke tells us that Mary went “in haste” to visit someone in need – her cousin, Elizabeth, who was much older than Mary. She, too, was to have a child. Mary gave us a beautiful example of outreach to others.

Voice 2: This was the same kindness that Mary extended to all – at the wedding feast of Cana, at the foot of the Cross, and through the many visits she has made to humankind through past centuries. Each time she has modeled for us a mother's love. She calls us to reach out to others – to all those in need, to the materially and spiritually poor, to the lonely, the confused, and the abandoned.

Voice 1: It is our hope, that just as Mary recognized God's great love to all, we may one day proclaim with her:

"My Soul Doth Glory In Your Love, O Lord"

(Mary and Elizabeth quietly and slowly leave.)

The Third Joyful Mystery – The Birth of Jesus

Voice 1: The time came when the words of the prophets would be fulfilled through Mary.

Voice 2: “Behold, the Virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name Him Emmanuel!”

Voice 1: Mary and Joseph, models of trust and obedience, set out for Bethlehem in accordance with the decree that all must be registered in their own town. It was not easy for Mary, as she was about to have her Child. The journey would be long and difficult; however, she knew it was God's will and thus she obeyed.

Voice 2: Mary models for us how to look beyond our own weariness and those things that would tempt us to neglect our obligations. She teaches us how to become more open to the will of God.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

(As people journeying to Bethlehem, 1st grade participants advance to the altar.

Mary and Joseph follow, and take their places in front of the altar.)

Voice 1: When they arrived in Bethlehem, the only available lodging was a stable, a place usually reserved for animals. *(The Pre-K and K participants with stuffed animals move closer.)*

Voice 2: While they were there, the time came for Mary's Child to be born. In the midst of this humble place, Mary took her baby, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.

Voice 1: Mary teaches us to focus on what is really important in life and to set aside the mundane. By focusing on the event of her Son's birth, Mary serenely gave us the answer in Bethlehem!

"What Child is This?"

Voice 1: Now there were shepherds living in the field and keeping night watch on their flock. The Angel of the Lord appeared to them and said: "*Fear not! I proclaim to you Good News of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you, who is Messiah and Lord.*"

Voice 2: The angel's command to the shepherds that they trust in God's promise is the same message of trust portrayed by Mary in the Scriptures ... "Do whatever He tells you!" She tells us to put ourselves in Jesus' hands, for it is only when we trust, that we can really know Jesus as the promised Messiah.

"The First Noel"

"Go Tell It On The Mountain"
(3rd grade shepherds approach the altar.)

Voice 1: Suddenly, there was in the heavens a myriad of angels praising God and singing.

Voice 2: Peace! The message of the first Christmas! This has always been Mary's plea, as she has spoken to us through the centuries. How can we be peacemakers in our families, in our neighborhoods, in our world?



"Gloria" (Refrain)
(4th grade angels approach the altar.)

"Angels We Have Heard on High"
(2nd grade participants carrying stars aloft approach the altar.
Child with largest star stands behind group at altar.)

Voice 1: Legend tells us that there were many stars in the sky that night. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that the brightness of one star led the Magi to the place where the Holy Family dwelt. These wise men recognized in the Holy Family something more than outward appearances. They recognized the goodness that was within, the simplicity of the surroundings, and the humble acceptance of the gifts of the Magi.

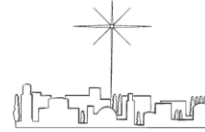
Voice 2: Mary leads us to a life of humility, simplicity and truth. Can we accept with humility and truth the wondrous gift which God has given us through the Incarnation of His Son? Do we recognize the gifts and talents that God has given us? Do we use these gifts for good?

"We Three Kings"
(6th grade Kings process to the altar.
The Kings lay their gifts at the feet of the Holy Family, and move reverently to the side.)

Voice 1: Throughout the centuries, many have come in adoration before the King of heaven and earth. The saints who followed Mary's example have shown us how to approach this holy season, and make this unsettled world a better place.

Voice 2: Our focus on the Nativity scene would be incomplete without a focus on **St. Joseph**, patron of all workers, who in his own quiet, humble way responded to challenges and rejection. We honor those whose lives, like Joseph's, were suddenly changed at the hands of others. May we, like Joseph, respond with peace and humility when we are faced with difficulties.

"O Holy Night"



The Fourth Joyful Mystery – The Presentation of Jesus

Voice 1: Reflecting on this mystery of the Presentation, we focus on the obedience and trust of Mary and Joseph, as they present Jesus in the temple.

Voice 2: We ask the intercession of Mary and Joseph in healing our world of sin and division, and in bringing the peace we so desperately seek.

"Silent Night"

The Fifth Joyful Mystery – The Finding of Jesus

Voice 1: Where might **We** find Jesus? We find Him:

- ... In the poor, the lonely and the downtrodden
- ... In those who have been the victims of terrorism
- ... In our hearts, renewed and inspired by the children here
- ... In the kindnesses extended to us by others
- ... In celebrations of our Faith, which lead us to Him

Voice 2: Now, as we approach our world with renewed faith, trust, and love, we look to Mary to be our model and guide. "Does a mother ever forget her child?" The Book of Isaiah firmly answers this question: "NEVER!" Mary has shown us she has never forgotten us and will never do so. We need to turn to Son and to Mother – to HIM through her. It is then and only then that we will have true "Joy to the World."



"Joy To The World"

As indicated in the program, certain parts are represented by specified grades.
Our 7th and 8th graders honor our program by filling the roles of major characters, readers, and ushers.

Religion Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards have an important place in every classroom. They should be interactive as they provide a way to introduce new concepts or display student work related to the concept. Every classroom in a Catholic school/PREP program should have at least one bulletin board dedicated to increasing student awareness of faith values. They should be changed/updated on a regular basis throughout the school year. Teachers and catechists should create boards that are equally engaging and educational. The use of interactive boards in the classroom ensures that students recognize the importance of the posted materials.



2017- 2018

Prayer

As we move on to the winter months, we continue our focus on the time-honored prayers of the Church. December provides an opportunity to focus on prayers of anticipation of the celebration of the Nativity as well as additional prayers to Mary whose concern for others during her anticipation of Jesus' birth set a great example for all. Depending on the level of the students, December is also a good month to focus on the Magnificat or the O Antiphons.

January is a month of beginnings. We focus here on prayers that, for many of us, were among the first prayers we learned: the Our Father and Glory Be. The Our Father is, perhaps, the first truly Christian formal prayer taught to us by Jesus himself. Because of the repetitive phrases similar to those in the Sign of the Cross, the Glory Be is one of the first prayers taught to children. Our challenge is to help the students to understand the prayers they are saying.

In February, we celebrate the feast of the Chair of St. Peter. This feast does not focus on a piece of furniture. The chair is a symbol of the special mission of Peter and his Successors to tend Christ's flock, keeping it united in faith and in charity. Our focus this month is on the important beliefs of our faith as seen in the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed.

During the remaining months of the school year we will focus on the following:

March – Prayers of the Stations; The Angelus and The Regina Coeli;

April – Prayers of the Mass

May – Come Holy Spirit, the Divine Praises



December

The Immaculate Conception; Advent Prayers; the Magnificat

**O MARY,
CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN,**



**PRAY FOR US
WHO HAVE RECOURSE
TO THEE!**

The feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. Our Lady announced her Immaculate Conception to Sister St. Catherine Labouré during the apparitions at the Rue du Bac back in 1830. She also taught Sister Catharine the following prayer:

“O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee”

Our Lady gave Sister Catharine the miraculous medal, which was at first called: “the medal of Mary of The Immaculate Conception”, and told to spread the devotion.

A bulletin board dedicated to the Immaculate Conception provides several opportunities:

- Teach younger students short prayers known as aspirations.
- Encourage students to wear a Miraculous Medal.
- Using, St. Maximilian Kolbe’s Novena to the Immaculate Conception, teach older students what a Novena is. This can be found at:

http://www.corazones.org/oraciones/oraciones_maria/novena_immaculate_conception_kolbe.htm



Hail and blessed be the hour and moment

*In which the Son of God was born Of the most pure
Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the
piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee,
O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires,
[here mention your request]
through the merits of Our Savior, Jesus Christ, and of
His blessed Mother. Amen.*

Sometimes the prayers we carry with us into adulthood are those handed down to us—not as formal prayers—but as part of a tradition. Such is the case with the Advent prayer, *Hail and Blessed*. This prayer helps us to reflect on the true focus of Christmas and helps us to prepare spiritually for His coming. Beginning on St. Andrew the Apostle's feast day, November 30, this prayer is traditionally recited fifteen times a day until Christmas.

Traditional prayers like this sometimes include vocabulary that students may be unfamiliar with. Rather than change the prayer, teach the students the synonyms for these words:

- Thee—you
- Vouchsafe--to grant or provide in a gracious manner.
- Beseech—ask. beg

Come



O Wisdom of our God Most High,
guiding creation with power and love:
come to teach us the path of knowledge



The O Antiphons have been used with the Liturgy of the Hours since the 8th Century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. Each antiphon uses biblical imagery drawn from the Old Testament to proclaim the coming of Jesus as the fulfillment of the hopes of the people of the Old Testament. The daily use of the imperative, "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Advent of Christ.

On the Bulletin Board, simply place the word "COME" at the top of the board, Change the prayer and symbol each day and reflect on its meaning during morning prayers. At the end of the day recite the Magnificat and antiphon with the students.



December 18



O Leader of the House of Israel,
giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai:
come to rescue us with your mighty power!

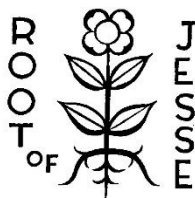
December 21



O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:
come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem,
sign of God's love for all his people:
come to save us without delay!



December 22



O King of all nations and keystone of the Church:
come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

December 20

O Key of David,
opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom:
come and free the prisoners of darkness!



December 23

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law:
come to save us, Lord our Go



January

Our Father, Glory Be

Our Father who art in Heaven,

Hallowed be thy name;

Thy kingdom come

Thy will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses

As we forgive those who trespass

against us;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

Our Father

Our Father who are in Heaven,

Holy is Your name;

Your kingdom come

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day What we need.

And forgive us our sins

As we forgive those who sin

against us;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

Our Father

You can teach the Lord's Prayer to your students in a meaningful way, so that their understanding of the prayer goes beyond simple recitation. This is a prayer said during Mass, so it is important that the students know it in its traditional form as it is used during Mass. It is also important that they know its meaning. On a bulletin board, place a copy of the traditional form of the Our Father in large print as seen in the illustration above on the left. Teach/review the Our Father one phrase at a time. Once the students know and can write out/recite the phrase from memory, clarify the vocabulary by pinning a meaning card on top of the unfamiliar words, explaining that sometimes we pray, we use "Church language" and the words we use are part of what we know as tradition. The words placed on top of these words help us to understand the meaning. An alternative would be to start with the right and gradually remove the meaning cards as students become more comfortable with the context.

The Our Father provides examples of three of the types of prayer—adoration, petition and contrition. Color code the phrases by type. Using slips of the same color paper, have the students write their own prayers of adoration, contrition and petition and use these as a border around the bulletin board.



Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Amen.



To help students understand what a prayer of praise is, teach them the refrain from the song, "Our God is an Awesome God." (video link below)

Most students understand the word "awesome" as referring to someone/something special and worth of our praise. Explain that the prayer, Glory Be, is another way of saying that Our God is an awesome God. We so not know or understand everything about him, but we do know He is special and we offer our praise by saying this prayer.

Use the symbol to show some of the things we know about God but they are still a mystery. For example, if you were to take a pointer and trace the symbol, there is no definite beginning or ending. There are three parts, but just one symbol. Likewise, God has no beginning or ending. There are three persons in God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but only one God.

<https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-mozilla-002&hsimp=yhs-002&hspart=mozilla&p=our+god+is+an+awesome+god+lyrics#id=38&vid=baeafe212cbddc218e56b10c08264c8b&action=view>

Templates for Creed Bulletin Board



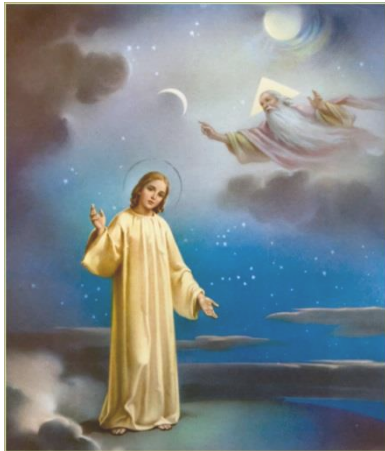
From The Kids Den
www.kidsden.com
Free for educational and non-profit use



From The Kids Den
www.kidsden.com
Free for educational and non-profit use

February The Creed

The Apostles' Creed



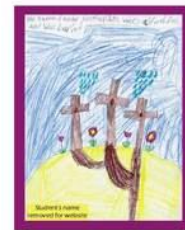
I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Creator of Heaven and earth

Teach younger students the Apostles Creed phrase by phrase until they have mastered all phrases. You can find pictures illustrating each phrase at: <http://www.catholictradition.org/Children/creed1.htm>

Change the picture as you move on to the next phrase. As you teach each phrase, have the students illustrate and complete a page as they build their own Apostles' Creed prayer book. Each day during a time of prayer, have the students pray the phrases they have completed.



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.

I BELIEVE



in



GOD

A Creed is a statement of beliefs. On a blank bulletin board, simply put the words, "I BELIEVE IN GOD." Begin a class with a reflection on the words of the song, "I Believe." (An example can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yt164D-zJnY>) Have the students reflect on the meaning.

Explain that when we pray the Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed, we are making a statement of our beliefs. Because the Creed is a summary of our beliefs, it is important to go through it—phrase by phrase—to increase understanding as some of the language used is not easily understood. A good explanation can be found at <http://www.ancient-future.net/nicene.html>

Invite the students to complete the bulletin board using pictures, belief statements or phrases that affirm their faith in God. See examples below.



CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Instruct the wise and they become wiser still. Proverbs 9: 9

Dynamic Catholic

<http://dynamiccatholic.com>

The *Dynamic Catholic* website was founded by Matthew Kelly, a Catholic author and speaker. The site includes a wealth of free resources: books, downloadable Confirmation materials, and Advent and Lent resources. The user can sign up to receive daily email reflections and download backgrounds.

Faith in Focus Weekly

<https://faithinfocusweekly.com>

The *Faith in Focus Weekly* website allows teachers to subscribe to a weekly email containing a video about the Catholic faith.

Today's Catholic Teacher

<http://www.catholicteacher.com>

The *Today's Catholic Teacher* website is a helpful tool for those looking for creative ways to enhance their religion lessons. The site contains free activities, lessons, tools and strategies that assist catechists in providing meaningful lessons for their students.

Apps for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod

Pray-as-you-Go App

The *Pray-as-you-go* app is a simple and practical tool for prayer. It includes many elements found on the pray-as-you-go.org website produced by the Jesuits. The app has a daily prayer podcast that one can listen to or read. It also includes traditional Catholic devotions, such as the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross, as well as Jesuit style prayers, such as the Examen and imaginative contemplation exercises.



Focus Equip App

The *Focus Equip* app is a good resource for those who teach youth and young adults. The app includes videos of bible studies and prominent Catholic speakers presenting a variety of Catholic topics. In addition, the app contains videos for training small group leaders.



Catholic Game App

The *Catholic Game* app is a fun way to test your students' knowledge about a variety of topics: Bible trivia, the Mass, Rituals, Objects, people and places. Questions are presented in multiple choice format and cite credible Catholic references.



Shared Wisdom

Two heads are better than one. Please submit your favorite technology resources for Catholic religious education at s.carment@yahoo.com. Submissions will be included in upcoming issues. Many thanks to those who shared tools for this issue.



Seek First the Kingdom

Parents in Partnership with God – Sharing Faith with Children

A Ministry of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Immaculata, Pennsylvania

PARENT ADVICE FROM POPE FRANCIS -- PART 5 of 6

The Joy of Love (Apostolic Exhortation), Chapter 4: "Love in Marriage"

In Chapter four of *The Joy of Love* Pope Francis tutors us on what love looks like in marriage. He reflects on the various elements that St. Paul included in the "love homily" that he wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 13: 4-7). For each of twelve love elements Pope Francis wrote two paragraphs. But for LOVE FORGIVES, he wrote four paragraphs. That ought to tell us something! In this Year of Mercy let us reflect on the quality of forgiveness.

LOVE FORGIVES

Hurts come from varied sources. We feel left out, betrayed, cheated, overlooked, wrongly accused, discounted, violated, ignored, put-down, embarrassed, ridiculed, disrespected, used or bullied. Because egos are fragile these slights fuel anger, defensiveness, standoffs, shutdowns, shutouts, and retaliation. *"Once we allow ill will to take root in our hearts, it leads to deep resentment."* (#105)

"The opposite of resentment is forgiveness, which is rooted in a positive attitude that seeks to understand other people's weaknesses and to excuse them." (#105). Forgiveness is a proactive freedom to "let go" of the offense rather than ruminate over it. Admit that someone offended you, name it for what it is, do not condone it but make a decision to grow beyond it and release the negative emotions associated with the person or event.

"Something is wrong when we see every problem as equally serious; in this way, we risk being unduly harsh with the failings of others." (#105). Let's face it! The only time anyone does hurtful things is when they are hurting. Let yourself wonder what is going on in the life of the offender. Pray for that person.

Parent Ponder-Points:

- On days that we are in a good mood and rested we react differently to stimulus than we do on a day when we are irritable. Establish good sleep routines and nutrition habits.
- We each have tender pressure points that make us more sensitive to feel hurt in situations that do not offend other people. Grow to know yourself and use self-talk when tempted to anger. Name, claim, and tame your emotions.
- Reverse roles. Put yourself in the shoes of the offender. What do you think is the reason behind his/her behavior? Rather than take it personally, consider the behavior as his/her struggle. Let that insight lead to compassion within you.

Reflection Questions:

1. When do you find it easy to forgive; when is it most difficult?
2. Where in your life do you need the grace of forgiveness?
3. Read *The Joy of Love*, # 105-108. What thought(s) most tutor your heart today?

LOVE FORGETS

Surely we have all heard the expression, “Forgive and forget” or “I can forgive but I will never forget!” The first expression requires thoughtful interpretation lest we mistakenly conclude that brainwashing is a component of forgiveness. The second expression fails to recognize that it is the essence of forgiveness to release the hurt from our memories.

When we ruminate over hurt and continue to hold onto anger we stop smiling and laughing. We cease to see the world around us with optimism. We isolate ourselves. We go into a pity world of one. We exist in an inner world of “I’ll show you!” or “I’ll get even with you!” or “I’ll make you pay!” or “You’ll be sorry!” By this kind of thinking we continue to hurt ourselves. We damage ourselves emotionally, psychologically, and even physically. Anger affects health.

Unforgiveness destroys family life. *“Family communion can only be preserved and perfected through a great spirit of sacrifice. It requires, in fact, a ready and generous openness of each and all to understanding, to forbearance, to pardon, to reconciliation” (#106). . . We need to learn to pray over our past history, to accept ourselves, to learn how to live with our limitations, and even to forgive ourselves” (#107).*

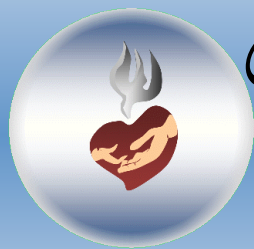
Parent Ponder-Points:

- Whenever anger/hurt surfaces pay a mantra like: “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing” or “Father, forgive my trespasses as I forgive his/her’s.”
- Use a Prayer Bowl to put before God a hurtful person or situation over which you have no control. Write the situation on paper, place it in the bowl, and ask God for the grace needed. Then “let go” of the situation.
- Each time you think of the offender slowly and thoughtfully pray this personalized version of the Our Father. (Example = Sue)

Sue’s Father who are in heaven. Hallowed be your name in Sue. Your kingdom come in Sue. Your will be done in Sue on earth as it is in heaven. Give Sue this day her daily bread and forgive Sue her trespasses as she forgives those who trespass against her. And lead Sue not into temptation but deliver Sue from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. What practice do you have to help you “let go of” (forget) hurts?
2. What do you suspect will happen within you if you pray the personalized version of the Our Father for someone who has wounded you?
3. Read *The Joy of Love*, # 107. What is something within yourself that needs forgiveness?



Busquen Primero el Reino

Padres de Familia Cooperando con Dios-

Compartiendo su Fe con sus Hijos/Hijas

Un Ministerio de las Hermanas, Siervas del Inmaculado Corazón de María

CONSEJOS DEL PAPA FRANCISCO PARA LOS PADRES DE FAMILIA

SEGUNDA PARTE 5 de 6 "La Alegría del Amor" (Exhortación Apostólica),

Capítulo 4: "El Amor en el Matrimonio"

En el Capítulo cuatro de la Exhortación contenida en la carta del Papa Francisco "La Alegría del Amor", El Papa Francisco nos enseña cómo es el amor en el matrimonio. Reflexiona sobre los diversos elementos que San Pablo incluyó en la "homilía del amor" que escribió a los Corintios (1 Corintios 13: 4-7). Para cada uno de los doce elementos de amor, el Papa Francisco escribió dos párrafos. Pero para lo relativo al "Perdón", el Papa escribió cuatro párrafos. ¡Eso debería decirnos algo! En este Año de la Misericordia, reflexionemos sobre la calidad del perdón que ofrecemos a otros.

EL AMOR PERDONA

El dolor en este ámbito puede provenir de variadas fuentes. En oportunidades nos sentimos excluidos, traicionados, engañados, ignorados, mal acusados, no validados, ignorados, despreciados, avergonzados, ridiculizados, despreciados, utilizados o intimidados. *"Si permitimos que el resentimiento, o amargura penetre en nuestras entrañas, otorgamos espacio a ese rencor que se anida en el corazón"* (105).

"Lo opuesto al resentimiento es el perdón, un perdón que se fundamenta en una actitud positiva, que intenta comprender la debilidad ajena y la comprende" (# 105). El perdón es una libertad proactiva para "soltar" la ofensa en vez de rumiar acerca de ella. Admitir que alguien le ofendió, nombrarlo por lo que es, no condenarlo, sino tomar la decisión de crecer más allá de él y liberar las emociones negativas asociadas al episodio con la persona son esenciales.

"Nos debiese alertar cada vez que asignamos igual valía e importancia a todos los errores, corremos el riesgo de ser muy severos con las fallas de los demás" (# 105). ¡Seamos sinceros! Generalmente cuando alguien nos hiere es porque a su vez el/ella experimenta sufrimiento muchas veces inadvertido por nosotros. Pregúntese: ¿Qué podría estar pasando en la vida del otro? Ore por esa persona.

Puntos Para Reflexionar:

- En los días que estamos tranquilos y en paz, reaccionamos de manera diferente a los estímulos que cuando lo hacemos cuando nos sentimos irritables. Incorpore para favorecer estados de tranquilidad buenas rutinas de sueño y hábitos nutricionales.
- Cada uno de nosotros tiene zonas sensibles que nos dejan vulnerables en situaciones que talvez no ofenderían a otras personas. Trabaje consigo mismo, cuando se sienta tentado a la ira. Nomine sus emociones, domestíquelas, aprenda a manejarlas.
- Invierta los roles, póngase en el lugar del e intente averiguar ¿Cuál será la razón que gatilla su comportamiento? En lugar de tomarlo personalmente, considere esa actitud como el trabajo del otro, no se lo asigne. Permita que esa intuición genere en Ud. compasión por el otro.

Preguntas de Reflexión:

1. ¿Cuándo le resulta fácil perdonar; ¿Cuándo le es más difícil?
2. ¿Cuándo, en qué instancias de su vida necesita de la gracia del perdón?
3. Lea La Alegría del Amor, # 105-108. ¿Qué idea contenida en ella lo interpela mejor?

EL AMOR LOGRA OLVIDAR

Seguramente todos hemos oído la expresión: "Perdona y olvídalos" o "Puedo perdonar, pero nunca podré olvidar". De la primera expresión concluimos, sin lugar a dudas, que el perdón no se asocia a una especie de "lavado de cerebro", como elemento constitutivo del proceso de otorgar perdón a otro. La segunda expresión no reconoce la esencia del perdón que es lograr liberar el dolor de nuestras memorias paulatinamente.

Cuando nos refugiamos y alimentamos de nuestro dolor dejamos de sonreír y de reírnos. Dejamos de ver el mundo que nos rodea con optimismo, nos aislamos a nosotros mismos. Entramos en un mundo solitario de autocompasión. Aparecen pensamientos como: "Voy a tomar venganza" o "Te haré pagar", o "Lo lamentarás". Este tipo de pensamientos nos lastima emocional y psicológicamente, incluso físicamente. La ira afecta la salud.

La falta de perdón destruye la vida familiar. *"La verdad es que «la comunión familiar puede ser conservada y perfeccionada sólo con un gran espíritu de sacrificio. Exige, en efecto, «de una pronta y generosa disponibilidad de todos y cada uno a la comprensión, a la tolerancia, al perdón, a la reconciliación» (# 106). . . . "Hace falta orar con la propia historia, aceptarse a sí mismo, saber convivir con las propias limitaciones, e incluso perdonarse, para poder tener esa misma actitud con los demás" (# 107).*

Puntos Para Reflexionar:

- Cuando el resentimiento se apodere de ti, recurrir a un mantra como: "Padre, perdónalos, ellos no saben lo que están haciendo" o "Padre, perdona mis ofensas como yo perdono las de él / ella" puede ayudar a transitar a una zona más iluminada.
- Otra idea que puede ayudar sería la utilización de un "Tazón de Oración" en el que ud. pueda depositar escrito en un papel el nombre de una/s persona/s que la haya/n herido o bien escribir alguna situación sobre la cual usted no tiene control y ponerla de esa forma ante los ojos de Dios. Deposítela/s en el tazón y pídale a Dios la gracia necesaria para "entregar y liberarse."
- Cada vez que piense en el que le propició una ofensa ore esta versión personalizada del "Padre Nuestro." (Ejemplo = Susana)

Padre de [Susana](#) que estás en el cielo. Santificado sea tu nombre en [Susana](#). Su reino vendrá en [Susana](#). Tu voluntad se hará en [Susana](#) en la tierra como en el cielo. Dale a [Susana](#) hoy su pan de cada día y perdona sus ofensas como ella perdona a los que le ofenden. Permite que [Susana](#) no caiga en tentación, protégela del mal. Porque tuyo es el reino, el poder y la gloria. Amén".

Preguntas de Reflexión:

1. ¿Qué le ayuda a ud. a liberar o "dejar ir" sus heridas?
2. ¿Cree que le podrá ayudar rezar la versión personalizada del Padre Nuestro descrita anteriormente?
3. Lee *La Alegría del Amor*, # 107. ¿Hay alguna zona dentro de ud. que necesite de perdón?